amiti singh

GSAPP ADVANCED ARCHITECTURE DESIGN PORTFOLIO

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CONTENTS

"We have been raised to fear the yes within ourselves, our deepest cravings. But, once recognized, **those which do not enhance our future lose their power and can be altered.** *"-Audre Lorde, Uses of the Erotic, The Erotic as a Power*

STOOPING THE DISRUPTION

INCIDENTAL AFFECTS IN ARCHITECTURAL SPACES
VIRTUAL DISRUPTION; FALL 2022

'One mans trash is another man's come up!' - as proclaimed by Macklemore on 'Thrift Shop' rings truer each day.

Essential existence in a modern age where the wage gap seems to widen every single day, yeilds to 'stooping' and 'thrifting' are a necessity ideas. Getting your hands on a vintage Stussy tee or a smalll piece of history with a mid-century modern cabinet is now more likely and more reposible with the help of these methods.

Stooping is an act of skilfully scavenging for furniture from the stoops of New York City - an activity which has it's own Instagram page. It is a **public spectacle exhibiting bodily performance on all possible scales - societal, environmental, and economical.** The economical, environmental, and social disruption of NYC is elevated by climate crisis, pandemic, and inequity. Stooping disrupts that disruption by creating a public performance of objects that delineate the surroundings from such crises. **The furniture pieces act as objects of soft, spatial protests on how the idea of social understanding of living is shifting/expanding in the contemporary times. At the same time, this resposibility is also a power.** As Audrey Lorde said, the power of the erotic comes from dissolving the hegemoic narratives of capitalism that subjects beauty and eroticism to things complying within that narrative. This simple idea of visual thrifting contests that.

STOOPING

An act of skillfully scavenging for furniture from the stoops of New York City. It is a public spectacle exibiting boldily performance on all scales-societal, environmental, and economical.
What is trash for someone, is gold for someone else.

or, as the great Macklemore proclaimed in his song, Thrift Shop, '
One man's trash is another man's come up!'

*the entire visualisation is a product of unreal engine 5 and polycam lidar scans

USING THE UN-USED AIRSPACE

AFFECT ARCHITECTURE IN THE PUBLIC SPECTACLES;
STREET STUDIO; JING LIU; FALL 2022

The local shops of 82nd Street have constantly been placed under **dispute due to inequity and diversity. The store owners face many issues that challenge their likelihood of surviving**. Language barrier, income inequality, and demographics play an important role in creating this climate inequity. The neighbourhoods facing the greatest cooling centre disparities are concentrated in Central Brooklyn, Central Queens, and across the Bronx.

A combination of dense urban footprint and low-rise roofs has forced round 30% of the businesses are temporarily/permanently closed in the street. Currently, New York City is home to less than 0.1% of NYC's 1 million buildings with green roofs with green roofs in Manhattan, particularly in midtown and downtown.
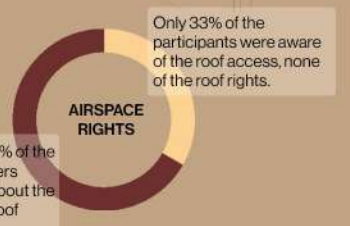
82ND STREET, JACKSON HEIGHTS, NYC

The local shops of 82nd Street have constantly been placed under dispute due to inequity and diversity. The store owners face many issues that challenge their likelihood of surviving. Language barrier, income inequality, and demographics play an important role in creating this climate inequity. The neighbourhoods facing the greatest cooling centre disparities are concentrated in Central Brooklyn, Central Queens, and across the Bronx.

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82ND STREET, JACKSON HEIGHTS, NYC

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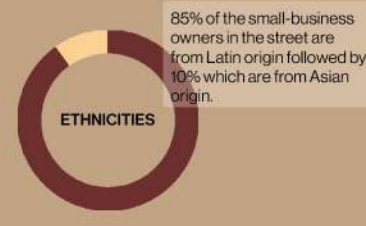
In fact, when asked, **a great number of the shops owners of 82nd street were unaware about the existence of the roofs** although most of them are accessible.

CLOSED SHOPS

GREEN ROOF AREA

COST INCURRED

11

12

BUILT DENSITY

ROOF ACCESSIBILITY

BUILDING AGE

30% of the shops in the street were temporarily/permanently closed. Most of them were on the floor above ground floor.

CLOSED BUSINESSES

63% of the demography in the shops consist of men. However, most of them are helpers working under women

37% of the demography consist of women out of which the most of them are handling the stores.

DEMOGRAPHY

85% of the small-business owners in the street are from Latin origin followed by 10% which are from Asian origin.

ETHNICITIES

When asked, 67% of the owners/managers weren't aware about the roof access or roof rights.

Only 33% of the participants were aware of the roof access, none of the roof rights.

AIRSPACE RIGHTS

Due to high density and heat island effect, 70% of the shops face a higher heat vulnerability.

HEAT VULNERABILITY

26% of the demography in the shops consist of people in their 40s. Most of them are the main store managers/owners.

17% of the demography in shops consist of people in their 30s. Majority of them are employees employed by the store owner/manager.

AGE GAPS

57% of the demography in shops consist of people in their 20s. Majority of them are kids of the owner/manager helping out in the store.

MEDIAN INCOME

The Esri maps highlight the fact that, "neighborhoods in close proximity to one another often reflect dramatic differences in economic status. And many of the boundaries between wealthy and low-income areas are shifting as cities gentrify and immigrant populations fluctuate."
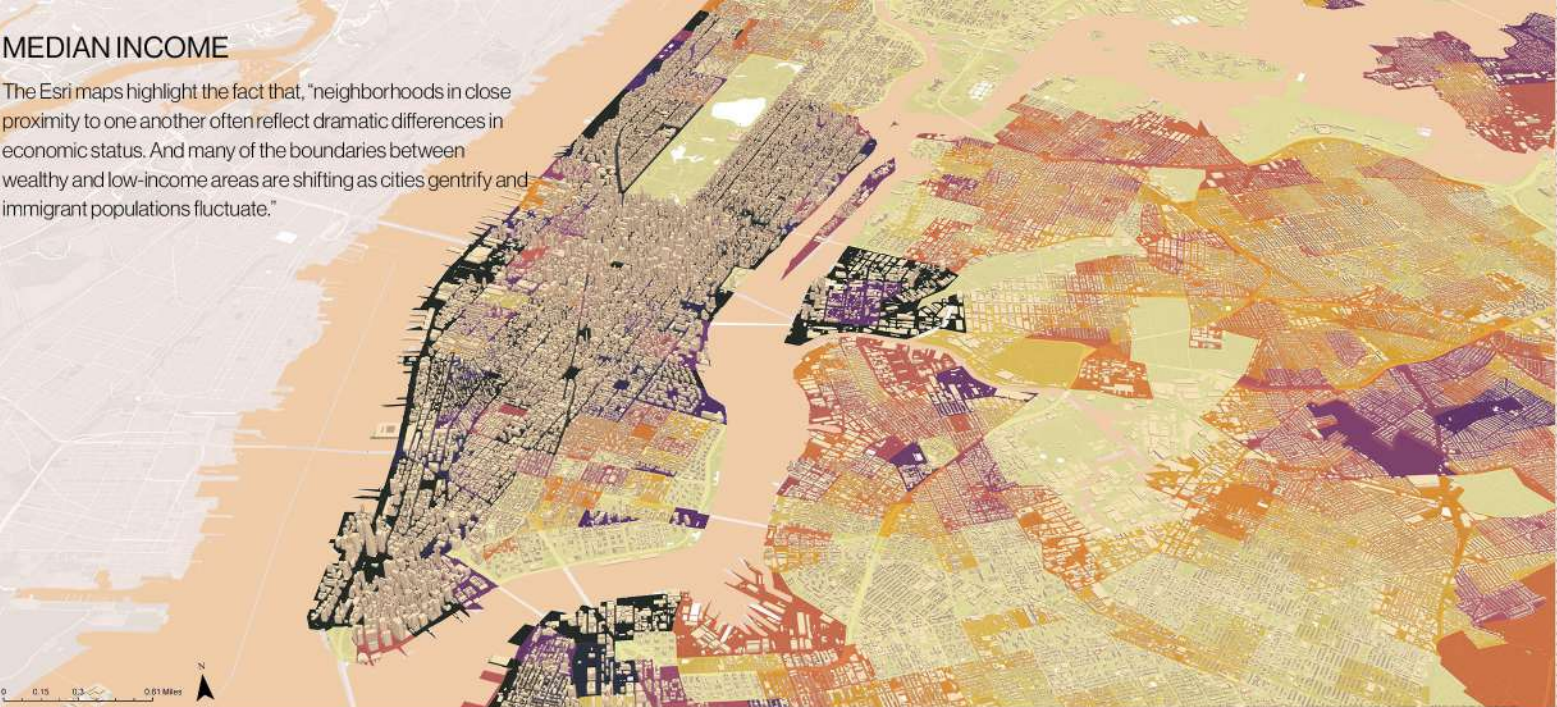
HEAT VULNERABILITY INDEX

Due to this, the neighbourhoods facing the greatest cooling centre disparities, based on heat vulnerability and population size, are concentrated in Central Brooklyn, Central Queens, and across the Bronx. Language barrier, income inequality, and demographics play an important role in creating climate inequity.
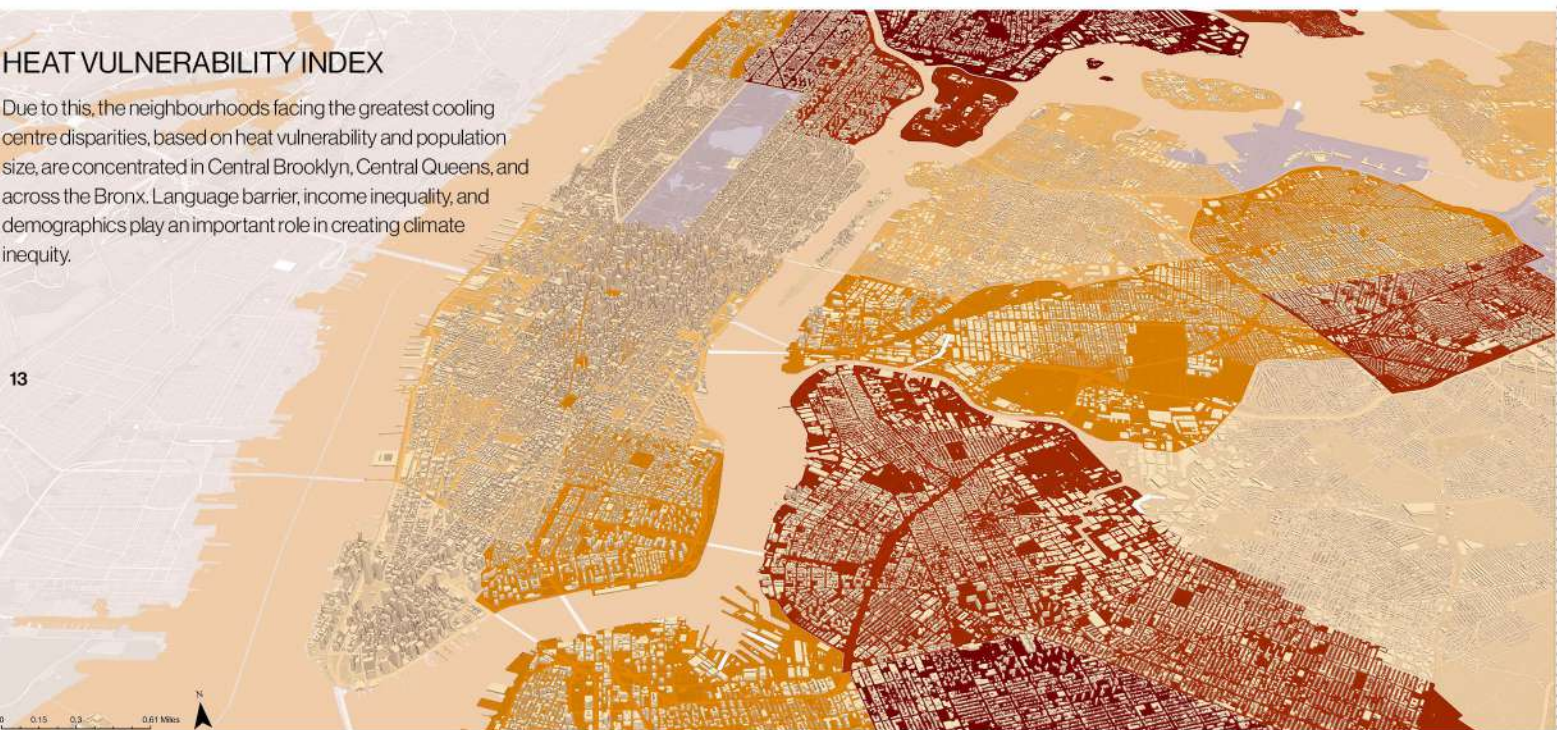
GREEN ROOFS

Currently, New York City is home to about 730 buildings with green roofs. It's a great start but represents just 60 acres of the 40,000 acres of rooftop space available (or less than 0.1% of NYC's 1 million buildings).
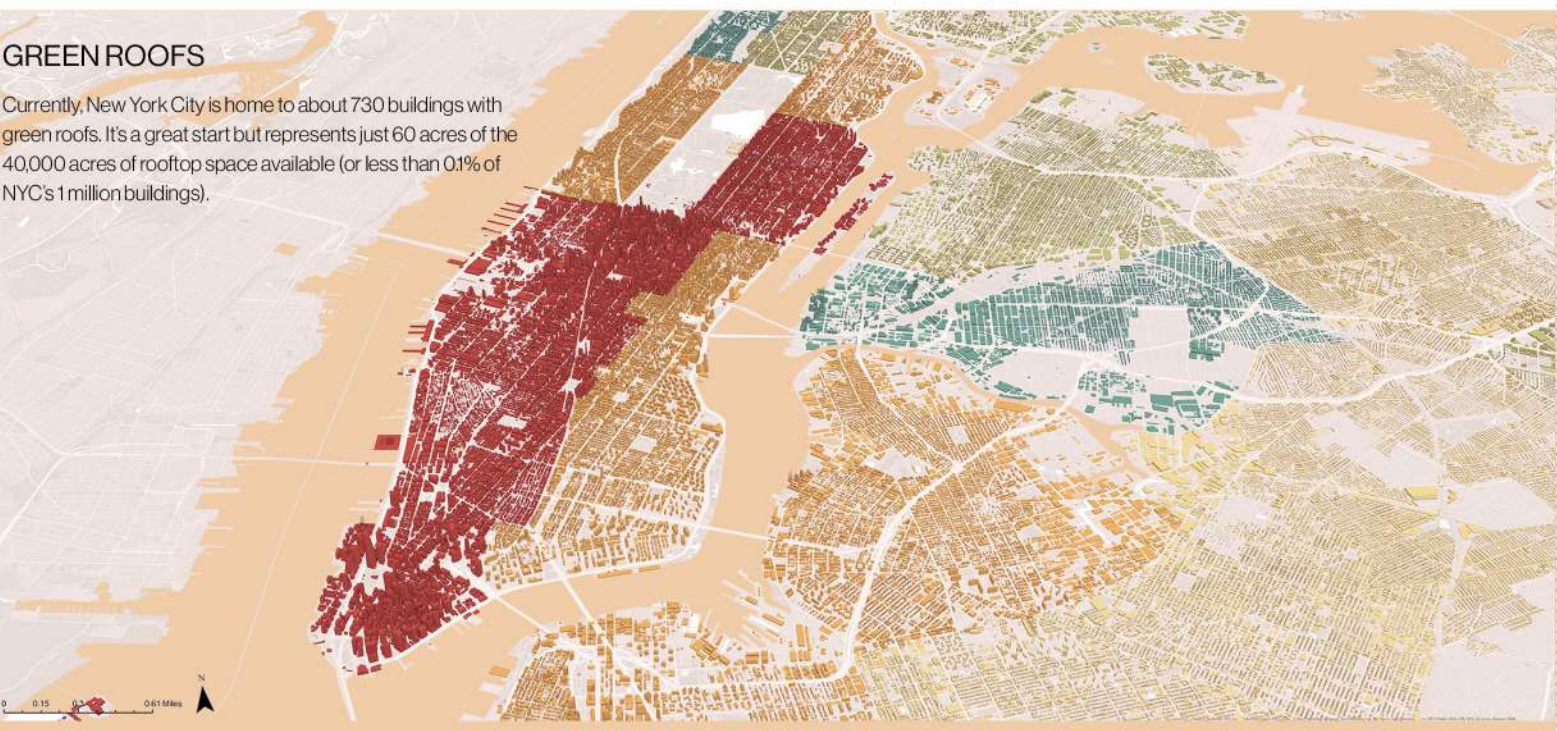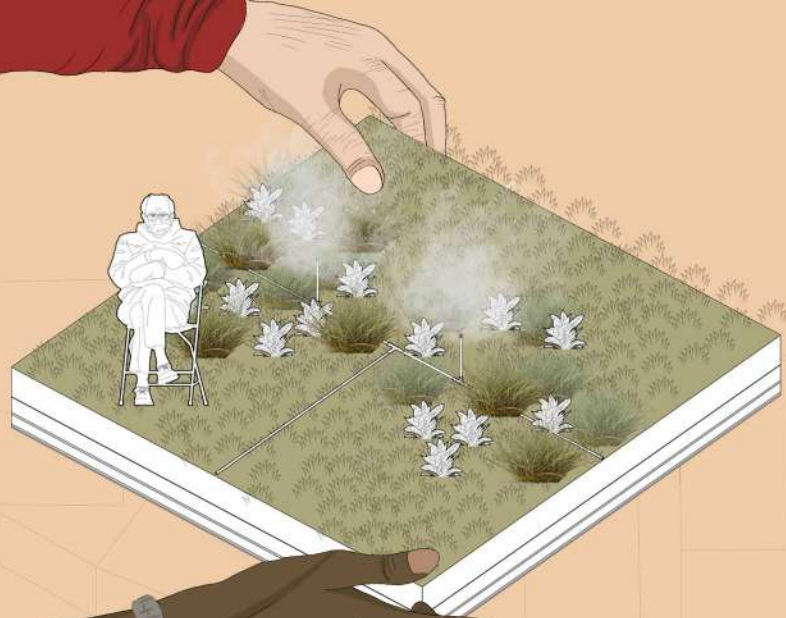
Business owner, Top Gun Fashion, 82nd Street
The owner spends her entire day in the shop with no reconcilation space of her own

Business owner, Community space, 82nd Street
The owner used the street space outside to sell her knitted hats

Employee, 82nd Street dental, 82nd Street
The employee faced heat inequity in their office space as it is on the highest floor

**CIRRUS PIPING
SELF-INSTALL GUIDE**

FLAT-PACKING

Designing a business model that can introduce "flat-packed" green roofs into the street can **centralise infrastructural control of green roofs to business owners**. Adding a self-installed layer of hydro-infrastructure can curate a performative structure that visually re-activates the connection between roofs and the street thereby attracting the public to visit. Using the initiatives of the NYC government and investors, this **modular tapestry of botany, functionality, and hydrology can expand the benefits of green roofs from environmental to financial**.

FINANCIAL INCENTIVES

Flat-packing offsets the cost of installation, thereby making the process cheaper.

The roofs also offset utility costs by reducing both heat gain and cold temperature. The incentives can allow business owners to equalise the active cost of buying these flat-packed products. The climate and financial incentives can create a community of business owners that are most self-sufficient. This **cost-benefit analysis still does not assume the passive benefits of green roofs such as reduced roof maintenance, self-owned food production, visitor attraction, and enhanced micro-climate.**

And also give a unique attribute of self-appropriation in the metropolis.

40-42 JACKSON HEIGHTS
COST: 10000$
GRT: 5230$
EIR: 5000$
UTILITY: 1051$
MONEY RECEIVED: 531$

40-36 JACKSON HEIGHTS
COST: 30000$
GRT: 15700$
EIR: 15000$
UTILITY: 1784$
MAINTENANCE: 2250$
MONEY RECEIVED: 225$

40-28 JACKSON HEIGHTS
COST: 20000$
GRT: 10460$
EIR: 10000$
UTILITY: 779$
MAINTENANCE: 1500$
MONEY RECEIVED: -260$

40-22 JACKSON HEIGHTS
COST: 20000$
GRT: 10460$
EIR: 10000$
UTILITY: 1435$
MAINTENANCE: 1500$
MONEY RECEIVED: 400$

40-18 JACKSON HEIGHTS
COST: 10000$
GRT: 5230$
EIR: 5000$
UTILITY: 714$
MAINTENANCE: 750$
MONEY RECEIVED: 195$

40-14 JACKSON HEIGHTS
COST: 10000$
GRT: 5230$
EIR: 5000$
UTILITY: 610$
MAINTENANCE: 750$
MONEY RECEIVED: 90$

40-10 JACKSON HEIGHTS
COST: 6000$
GRT: 3138$
EIR: 3000$
UTILITY: 478$
MAINTENANCE: 450$
MONEY RECEIVED: 166$

8120 ROOSEVELT AVENUE
COST: 6000$
GRT: 3138$
EIR: 3000$
UTILITY: 552$
MAINTENANCE: 450$
MONEY RECEIVED: 240$

40-44 JACKSON HEIGHTS
COST: 10000$
GRT: 5258$
EIR: 5037$
UTILITY: 980$
MONEY RECEIVED: 457$

40-38 JACKSON HEIGHTS
COST: 20000$
GRT: 10460$
EIR: 10000$
UTILITY: 3238$
MAINTENANCE: 1500$
MONEY RECEIVED: 2198$

40-30 JACKSON HEIGHTS
COST: 20000$
GRT: 10460$
EIR: 10000$
UTILITY: 544$
MAINTENANCE: 1500$
MONEY RECEIVED: -495$

40-26 JACKSON HEIGHTS
COST: 20000$
GRT: 10460$
EIR: 10000$
UTILITY: 779$
MAINTENANCE: 1500$
MONEY RECEIVED: -260$

40-20 JACKSON HEIGHTS
COST: 10000$
GRT: 5230$
EIR: 5000$
UTILITY: 847$
MAINTENANCE: 750$
MONEY RECEIVED: 327$

40-16 JACKSON HEIGHTS
COST: 10000$
GRT: 5230$
EIR: 5000$
UTILITY: 728$
MAINTENANCE: 750$
MONEY RECEIVED: 208$

40-12 JACKSON HEIGHTS
COST: 10000$
GRT: 5230$
EIR: 5000$
UTILITY: 772$
MAINTENANCE: 750$
MONEY RECEIVED: 252$

40-08 JACKSON HEIGHTS
COST: 5900$
GRT: 3099$
EIR: 2950$
UTILITY: 507$
MAINTENANCE: 442$
MONEY RECEIVED: 200$

TURFING

LANDSCAPING CUM SELF-

CIRRUS PIPING SELF-INSTALL GUIDE

ALTOCUMULUS PIPING SELF-INSTALL GUIDE

ALTOCUMULUS PIPING SELF-INSTALL GUIDE

Climate and financial incentives for green roofs can create a community of business owners that are most self-sufficient and also give a unique attribute of self-appropriation in the metropolis.

So, look up.

COUNTER-MEMORY

AFFECT ARCHITECTURE IN THE PUBLIC SPECTACLES;
BODIES AND PUBLIC SPACE; BRYONY ROBERTS; SPRING 2023

In the kitschy words of postmodernist architects, the continuity of past and present is what defines history. It is a process which is running—feeding off its energy. But there are times when this process stabilises, and becomes stagnant. These plateaued voids sit between two different heightened points of history. These voids are filled with memories. Either these memories are converted into memorialised monuments of architecture which fragment the past in museums, devoid of the context of its origination. Or, these morsels of our history are reassembled in a space with the supreme force of "recreating the natural setting. The former attitude of modernism allows architecture to freeze the process of time of this post and the latter allows us to relive it.

The five white-male architects of New York did not take the politics of memorialisation into account. The hegemonic comprehension of gender, religion, equity, and power can render cursory translations of histories which can restructure the concept of time itself. James Young, in his article, mentioned that "the best German memorial to the Fascist era and its victims may not be a single memorial at all, but simply the never to be resolved debate over which kind of memory to preserve, how to do it, in whose name, and to what end." Public memorialisation of historical portraits like that of the Holocaust faces this important question. The question of how **the embodied power of intersectional narratives can change the way history is read/perceived**. And how the representation of these memorialised bodies breaks the authoritarian control that still grapples them.

—————————

I recently went to a talk delivered by Andri Snær on his book, On Time and Water. The book focuses on retelling different accounts of climate crises using non-fictional narratives. During his presentation, he mentioned how his idea of storytelling operates on humanising dispassionate accounts that unemotionally justify the climate crisis. By humanising these accounts, he aimed to cater to the subjective ideas of climate change and induce a more intimate and hence, a more resilient response from each of his audience.

So, to understand memory, counter-memory, and memorialisation, I decided to employ an evocation to which I can relate. The recent pandemic was an act that was experienced by all bodies. And of course, it induced a diverse number of responses from different bodies. For me, covid was a time when I cooked more, worked out every day, and occasionally had bouts of anxiety, but mostly tried to gather my "shit" together. For my house help, it was a time when her earnings were reduced by half and she was compelled to work in covid-ridden households. For my friend, it was the time when he lost his father which triggered his fight with depression. So, as a designer, treating individualised archives of different bodies using a singular monument seems almost impossible—especially from a non-hegemonic perspective. Additionally, **a monumental representation of the pandemic renders precedence in history that will perpetually remain fragmented**.

This results in thinking about "counter-monuments"—an outcome of counter-memory. As applied by the philosopher Michel Foucault and restated by Young, the term re-calibrates the idea of remembering. In this process, he defines memories as being "constructed", rather than naturally occurring. The term counter-memory questions the very existence of these authoritative, heterosexual narratives. Counter-memory is every individual's act of rebelling against the predominant connection between history and memory. Projects like Harburg's Monument against Fascism and even the Memorial of Murdered Jews in turn become these self-conscious spaces that challenge the notion of antagonistic memories. Using abstracted, non-representational strategies, such projects throw the burden of translating the act of remembering back into the community. And they also allow individualised intimacy and collective simultaneity of remembering to parallelly function towards interpreting these public spaces.

The beauty of sensitising the notions of memory, and counter monuments initiate liminality on how each body understands time, how each body remembers, and finally, **how each body perpetuates the act of letting go.**

OUROBOROS OF MASS BURIALS

COUNTER-MEMORIALISATION OF MASS BURIALS; w/LUCAS PEREIRA
LIMINAL DOMAINS; KARLA ROTHSTEIN; SPRING 2023

Unique to the general practices of death adopted in New York City, Hart Island has embodied distinctive cycles of grief<>decomposition and life<>death, both spiritually and materially. Since the 1800s, Hart Island has undertaken the responsibility of naturally burying the unclaimed bodies of the city thereby allowing them to have a unique cycle of reconciliation.

A similar concept is represented through the agnostic symbol of Ouroboros - which symbolizes an eternal cycle of life and death, destruction and recreation, grief and acceptance. Through natural processes and mass burials , Hart Island offers opportunities for burial to be part of a cycle of collectivity with integration of all living systems. It is a site where the tradition of permanence holds less sway.

With the change in jurisdiction from the NYC Department of Corrections to the Parks Department, we are transforming Hart Island into a safe haven, where New York City residents and visitors can experience loss, remembrance, and healing through spiritual and physical connections with both landscape and architecture. In addition to engaging with burials, Hart Island is vulnerable to sea-level rise. So, our project **reimagines the practice of burials on Hart Island, both ecologically and spiritually**. Referencing the ancient technique of burial mounds, we are restructuring/ elevating the exercise of mass burials on the island while prolonging the time that the island takes to reconcile back into the water. Through a spatial performance between delicate space frames and earth, these mounds continuously morph to respond to the change in time/burials, variations of grief, human/non-human loss, and temporality of models of marking life<>death of that loss. And thus, we want to reinterpret Hart island's new identity as a public sanctuary.

Liminal domains exist between **spiritual and material synergies of life, death, and loss; between what is above and what is below the ground.**

Above, it depicts mourning traditions through time divided by days, months, and years. The performance of these traditions challenged us to broaden our perspective of mourning and understand that grief and healing are atypical. Its relation to time and togetherness is subjective.

Below, the loss emulates a body reconciling back into the earth. This diagram shows the elements that are part of natural decomposition and how this process also becomes subjective under different physical conditions.

The process of grief and decomposition creates a liminal cycle of life and death both spiritually and materially, tying to the concept of OUROBOROS.

OUROBOROS is an ancient symbol depicting a serpent or dragon eating its tail. It is a gnostic symbol that expresses the cyclic nature of time and creation, which never disappears but perpetually changes form in an eternal cycle of destruction and re-creation.
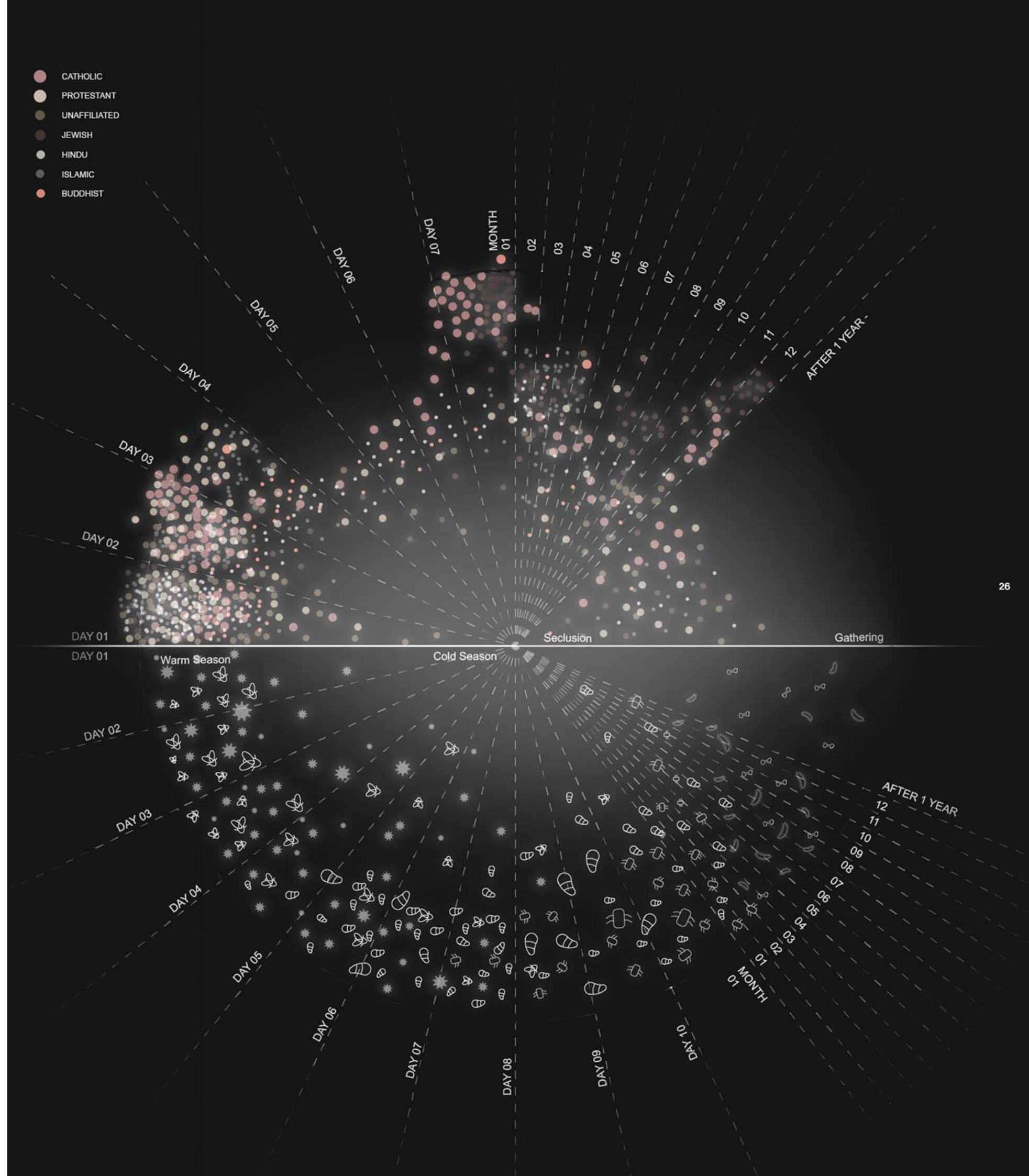
Recently, there has been a shift in the jurisdiction of the island from Department of correction to Parks and recreation. But the department has not been part of the burial business so far, and they have been known to convert active cemeteries into parks. Historically, some of them being, central park, washington square park, and Bryant park as shown in this map. This works in addition to the fact that the current cemetery-scape is already burdened with the lack of space to acknowledge the rising burial rates. **With the current rate of burials, the cemeteries of NYC will need at least 4 times their areas to accommodate all the burials.** Which is 20 times as much as the area of central park.

Also, barely any cemeteries acknowledge the importance of rituals of grief for the process of reconciling with loss. A primary cause of which is median household income in NYC. An average household has to spend anything ranging from 0.9 times to 6.5 times of their monthly income just to afford basic burial practices. Knowing that the parks and rec do not favor keeping the burial sites active in a city that needs space, **how can the most vulnerable be able to practice acts of remembrance?**

And how will they memorialize their loved ones?

CEMETERIES IN 75 YEARS

CEMETERIES CONVERTED INTO PARKS

0.65 x MONTHLY HOUSEHOLD INCOME FOR DECENT BURIAL

0.9 x MONTHLY HOUSEHOLD INCOME FOR DECENT BURIAL

1980 BURIAL MARKERS

PEACE MONUMENT

COMPOUND

CARRIAGE HOUSE

FUTURE BURIAL SITES

GAZEBO

CHAPEL

ADMIN BUILDING

DYNAMO ROOM

BUTCHER SHOP

2000 BURIAL MARKERS

1990 BURIAL MARKERS

PHEONIX SHOP

PUMPING STATION
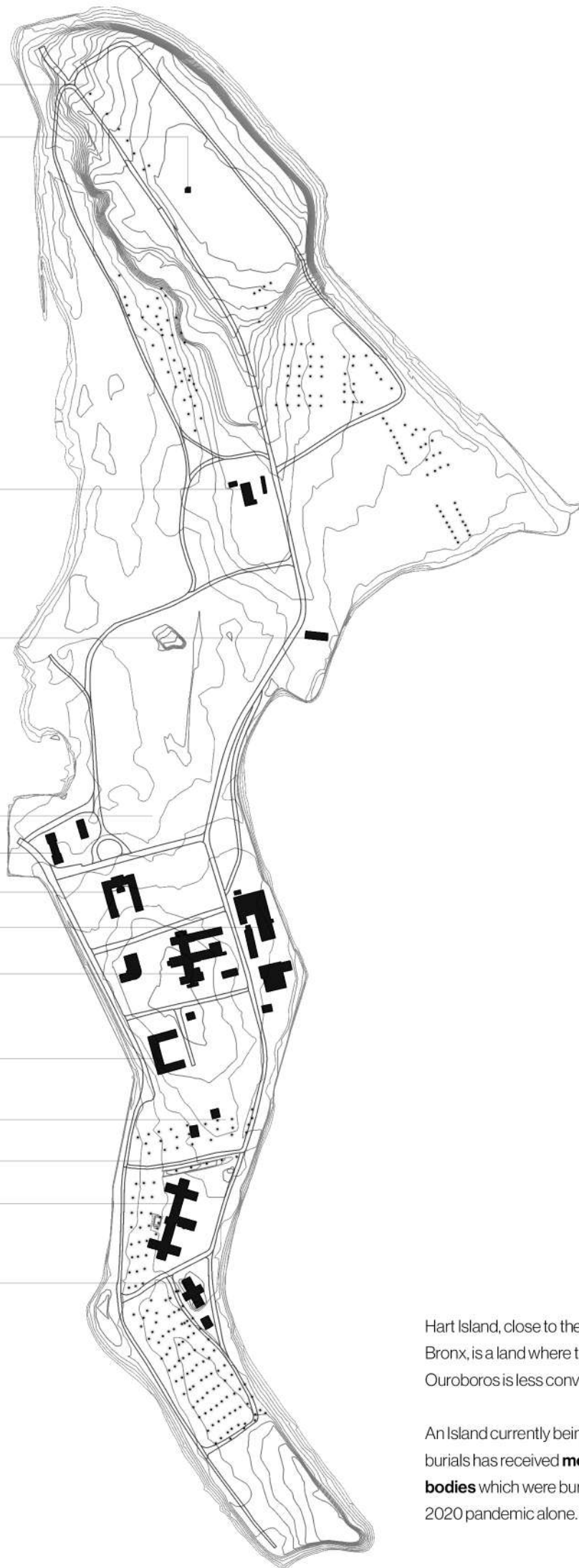
Hart Island, close to the city island and Bronx, is a land where the understanding of Ouroboros is less conventional.

An Island currently being used for mass burials has received **more than 2000 bodies** which were buried there due to the 2020 pandemic alone.

Hart Island, close to the city island and Bronx, is a land where the understanding of Ouroboros is less conventional.

An Island currently being used for mass burials has received more than 2000 bodies which were buried there due to the 2020 pandemic alone.

Under the jurisdiction of the Department of Corrections, the island is known for situating an unusual process of death. People in the city not claimed within 48 hours of their death are sent to this island. Their bodies are stacked and incidentally, naturally buried in trenches by inmates. Over the last **150 years, over 1 million people have been buried on the island**.

Courtesy: Hart Island Project

However, the island isn't fully unattributed. An initiative called the **Hart Island project is attempting to identify some of the people buried in the site**. Stories recorded by their loved-ones have allowed this initiative to humanize the identity of the island.
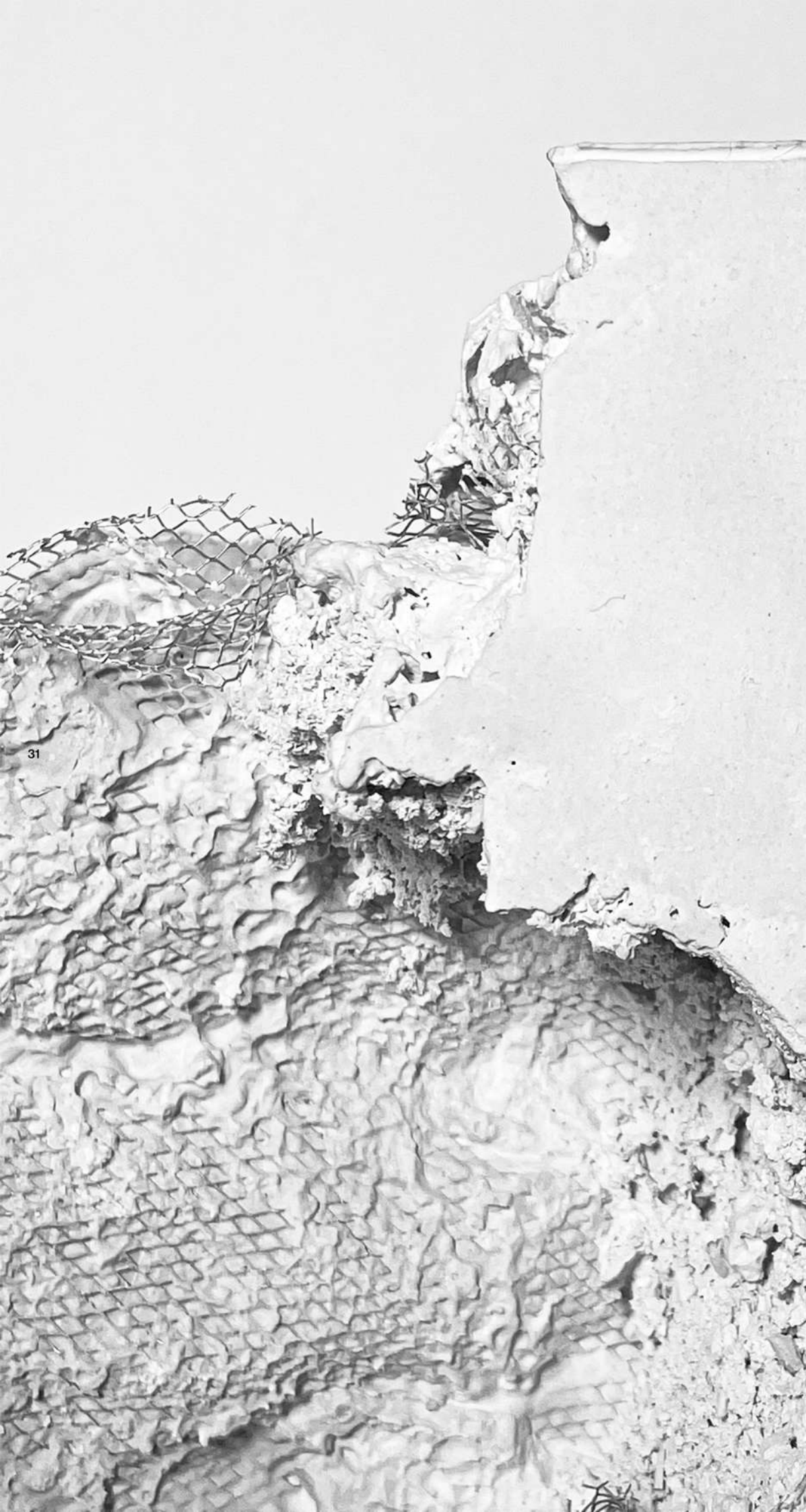
Our architectural language was inspired by our material studies in which we explored liminality materially, performing a series of experiments with ice and rockite.

We used three different types of density of ice: Ready-made ice, broken ice, and crushed ice. We started to observe the interference of ice aggregation in edge and field conditions.
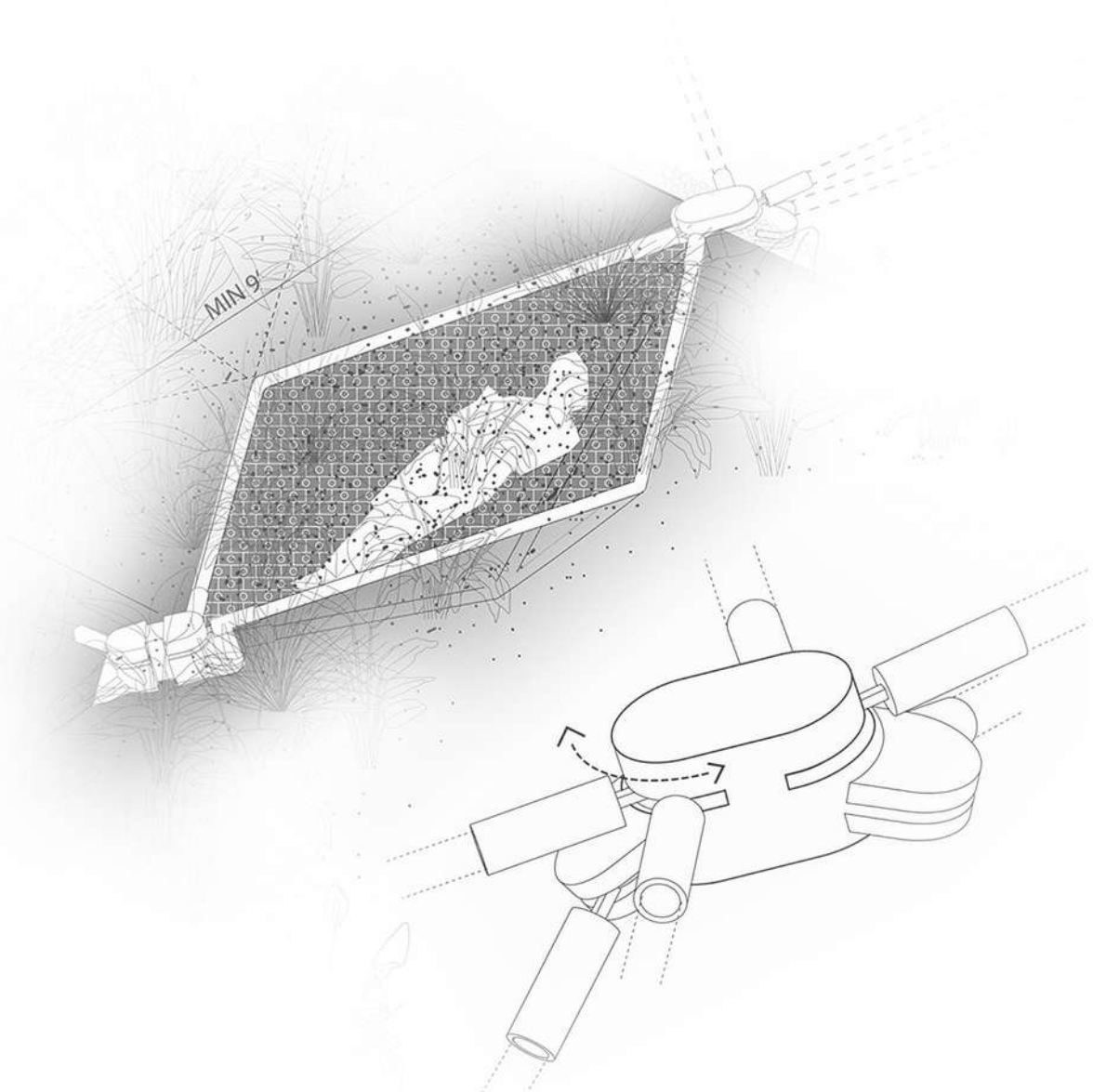
Our latest interaction used a mesh to control the field conditions and allowed us to explore the results better. This inspired us to create **a mesh-like hybrid structure that would provide not only stability for the mounds** but also the space for burial activities.
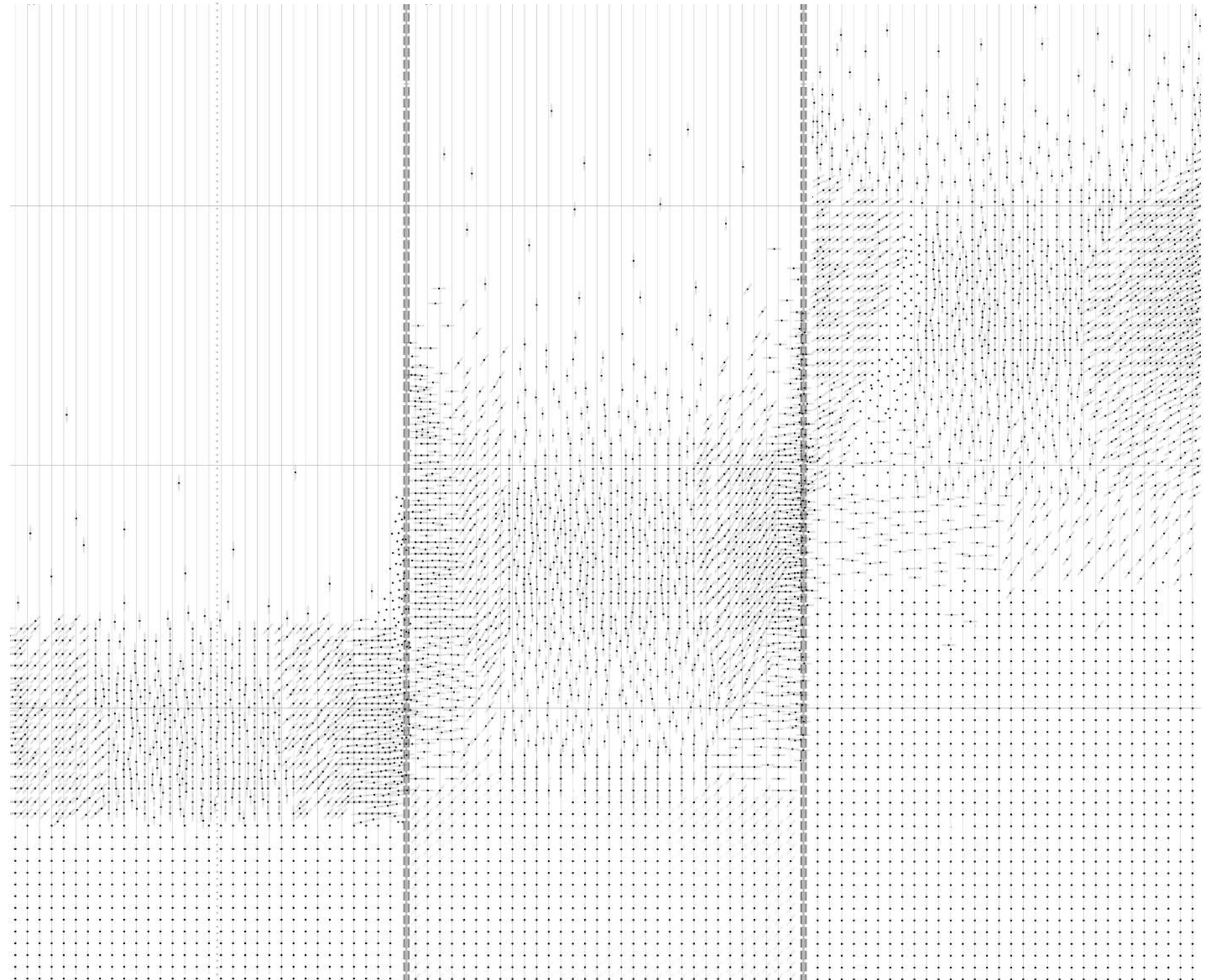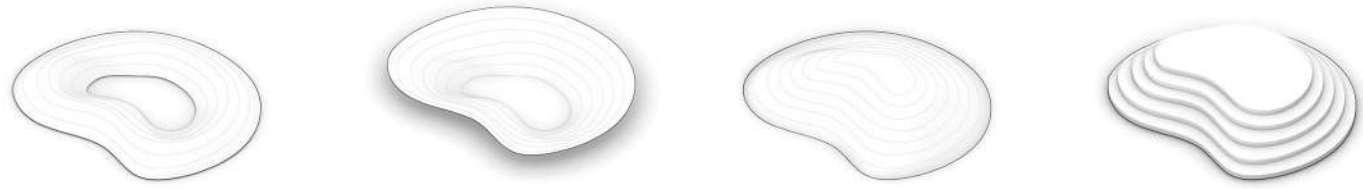
Our first response looks at **elevating this landscape of death instead of unearthing more ground** and making the island more vulnerable. We intend to create a burial typology that works with the ecology of the island rather than taking away from it.

We were inspired by **modified landscapes through time to create a set of experiences and taxonomy of mounds**. From ancient times, where native Americans were buried in mounds. To architectural landscape projects, such as the celestial vault, designed by James Turrel. And agricultural landscapes, such as terrace farms.
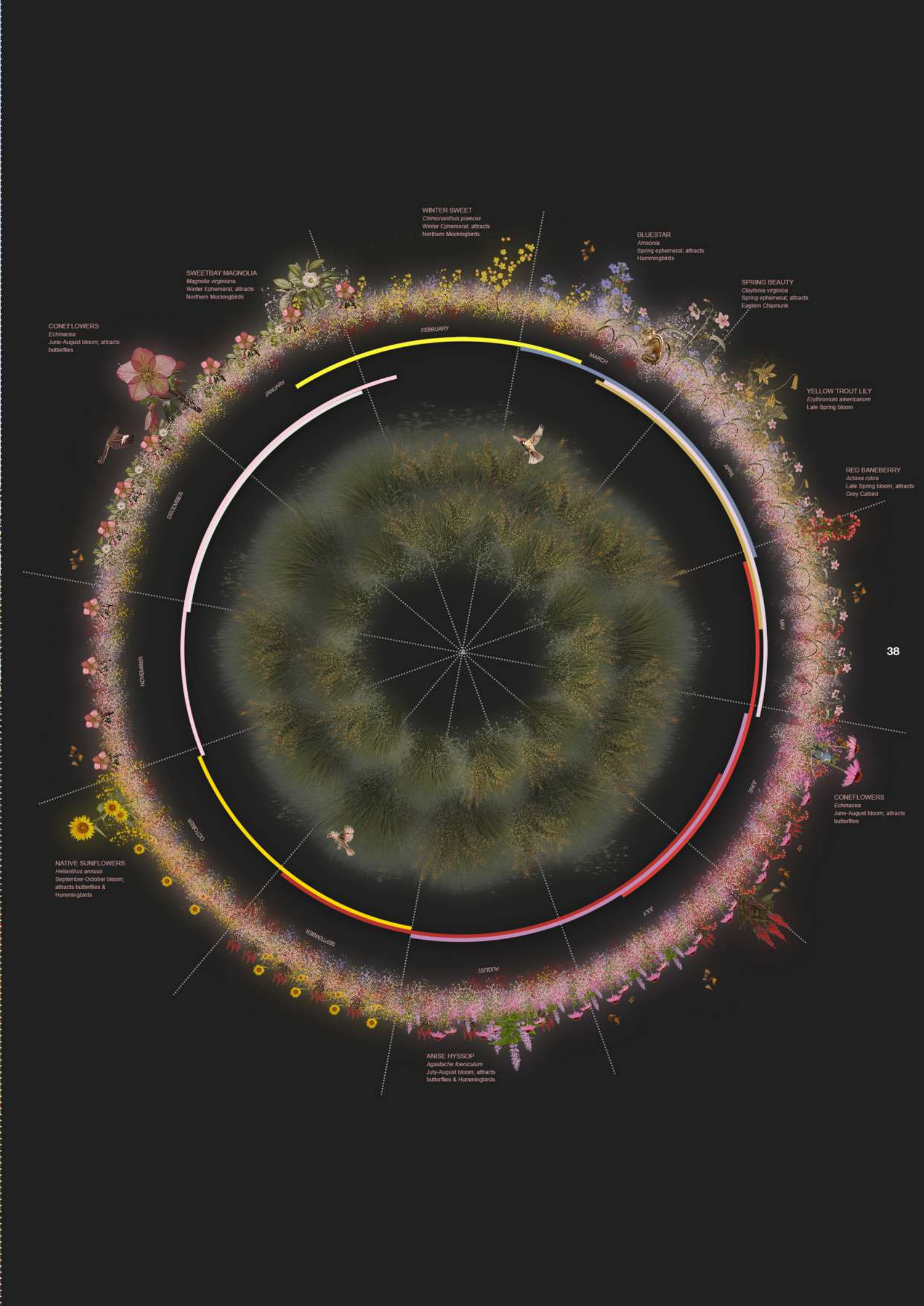
However, these mounds **do not function as static monuments of memorialisation**. They are built and rebuilt with shifts in timelines of the island and the cyclic nature of bodies reconciling back into the earth.

So, the mounds will always be **changing, moving and accommodating the cyclic nature of death and reconciliation**, to repurpose the casket for a periodic system of loss.
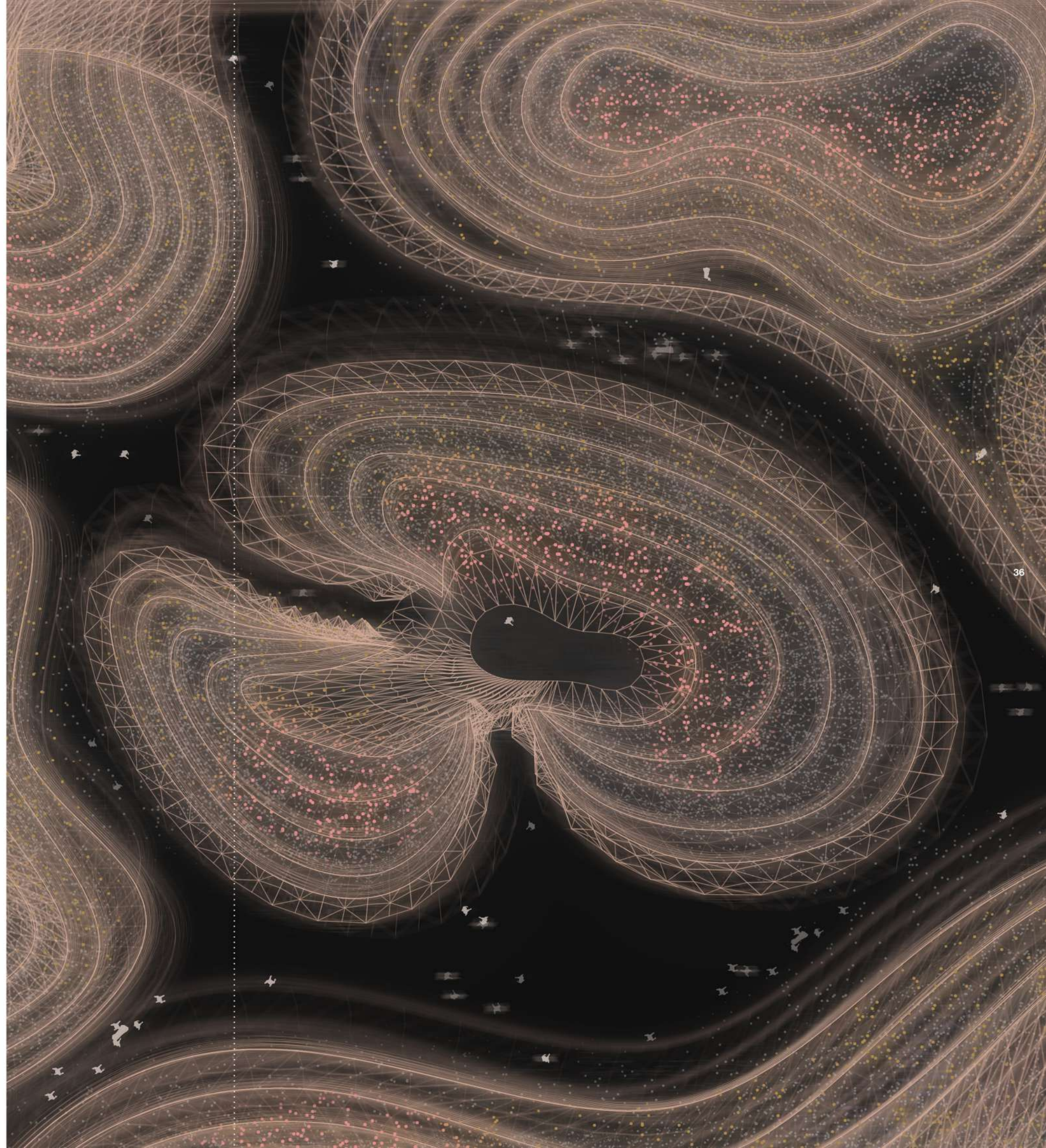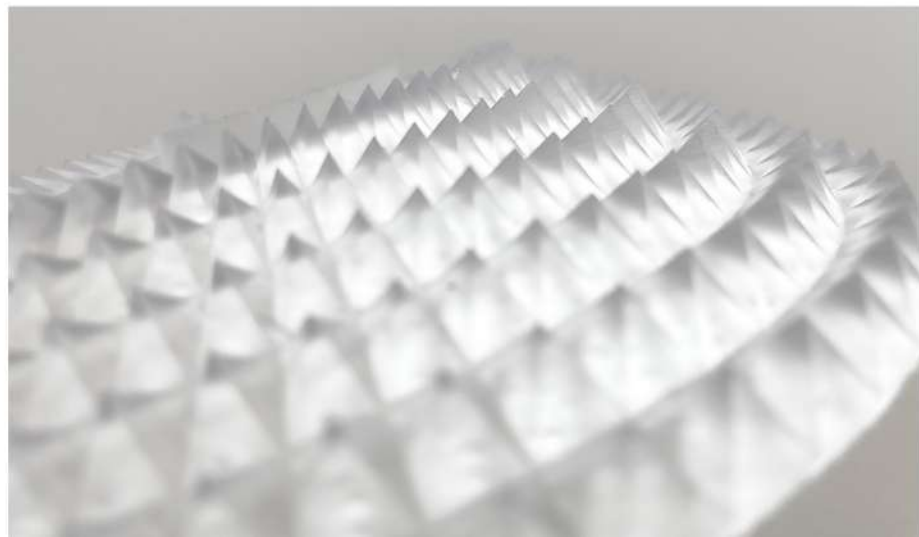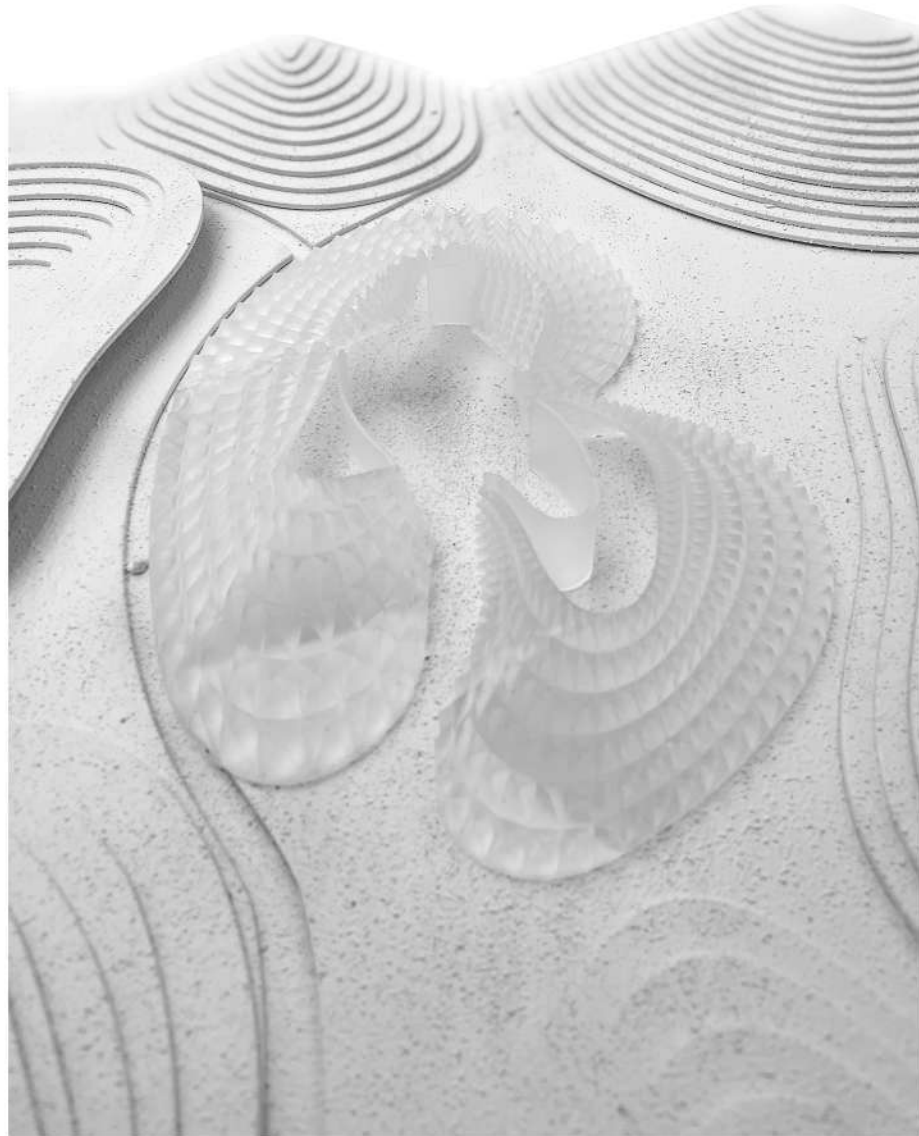
The idea of counter-memorialisation and counter-ritualisation predominantly pushes itself within the landscape of the mounds. **Flowers,which themselves are seasonal, and changing, create temporal models of care for the memory of the loss.**

Through this concept, our idea is to reassess the permanence of loss created by objects like burial markers and other monuments.

CONEFLOWERS
Echinacea
June-August bloom; attracts
butterflies

SWEETBAY MAGNOLIA
Magnolia virginiana
Winter Ephemeral; attracts
Northern Mockingbirds

WINTER SWEET
Chimonanthus praecox
Winter Ephemeral; attracts
Northern Mockingbirds

BLUESTAR
Amsonia
Spring ephemeral; attracts
Hummingbirds

SPRING BEAUTY
Claytonia virginica
Spring ephemeral; attracts
Eastern Chipmunk

YELLOW TROUT LILY
Erythronium americanum
Late Spring bloom

RED BANEBERRY
Actaea rubra
Late Spring bloom; attracts
Grey Catbird

CONEFLOWERS
Echinacea
June-August bloom; attracts
butterflies

NATIVE SUNFLOWERS
Helianthus annuus
September-October bloom;
attracts butterflies &
Hummingbirds

ANISE HYSSOP
Agastache foeniculum
July-August bloom; attracts
butterflies & Hummingbirds

FEBRUARY
JANUARY
MARCH
DECEMBER
NOVEMBER
JULY
MAY
JUNE
SEPTEMBER
AUGUST

Flexibility also allows us to explore the **phenomenological and spatial qualities of the mounds**, where the visitor can go under it and above it.

It also provides opportunities for programs to be inserted into the mounds. Structurally, the construction debris and soil from repurposed from nyc soil banks can allow these structural systems to be reinforced without compromising on the efficacy of microbes to decompose the bodies.

So, the site enacts a **performance of decomposition, procession, and landscape which is varying and constantly changing with time.**


01.

02.

03.

41

42
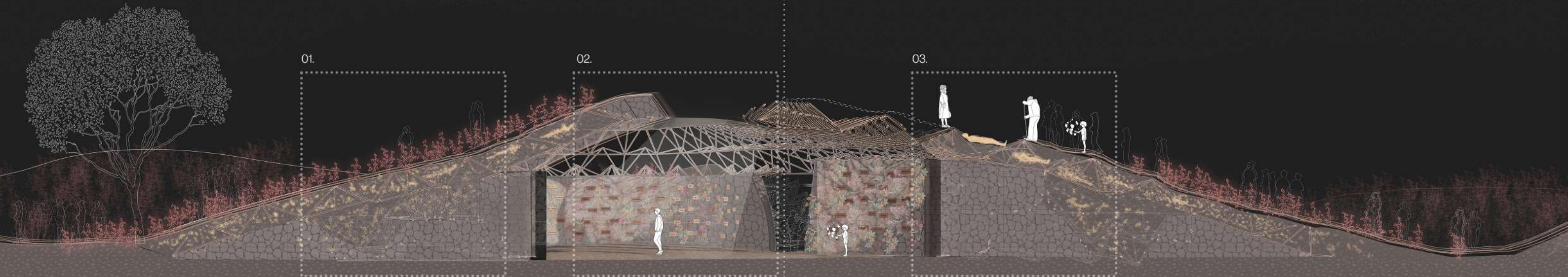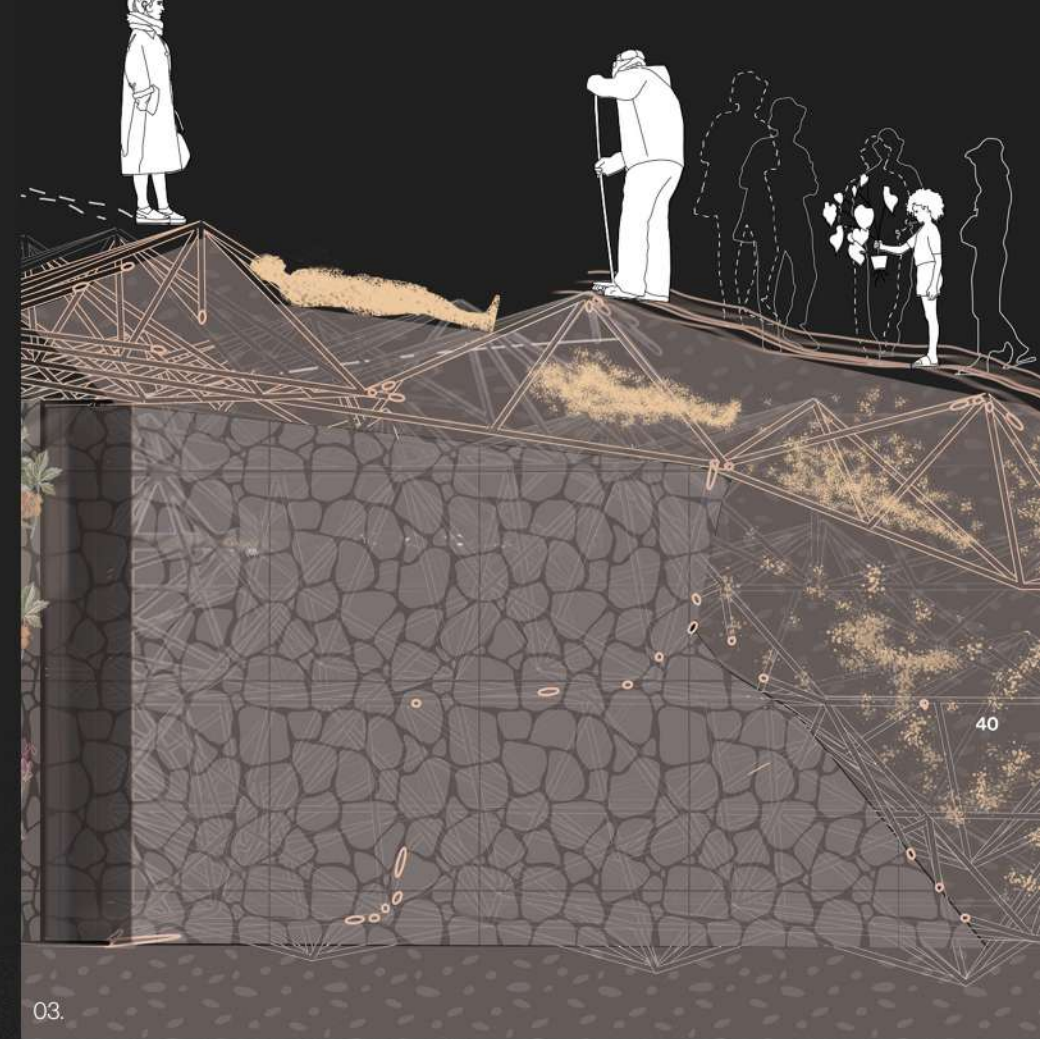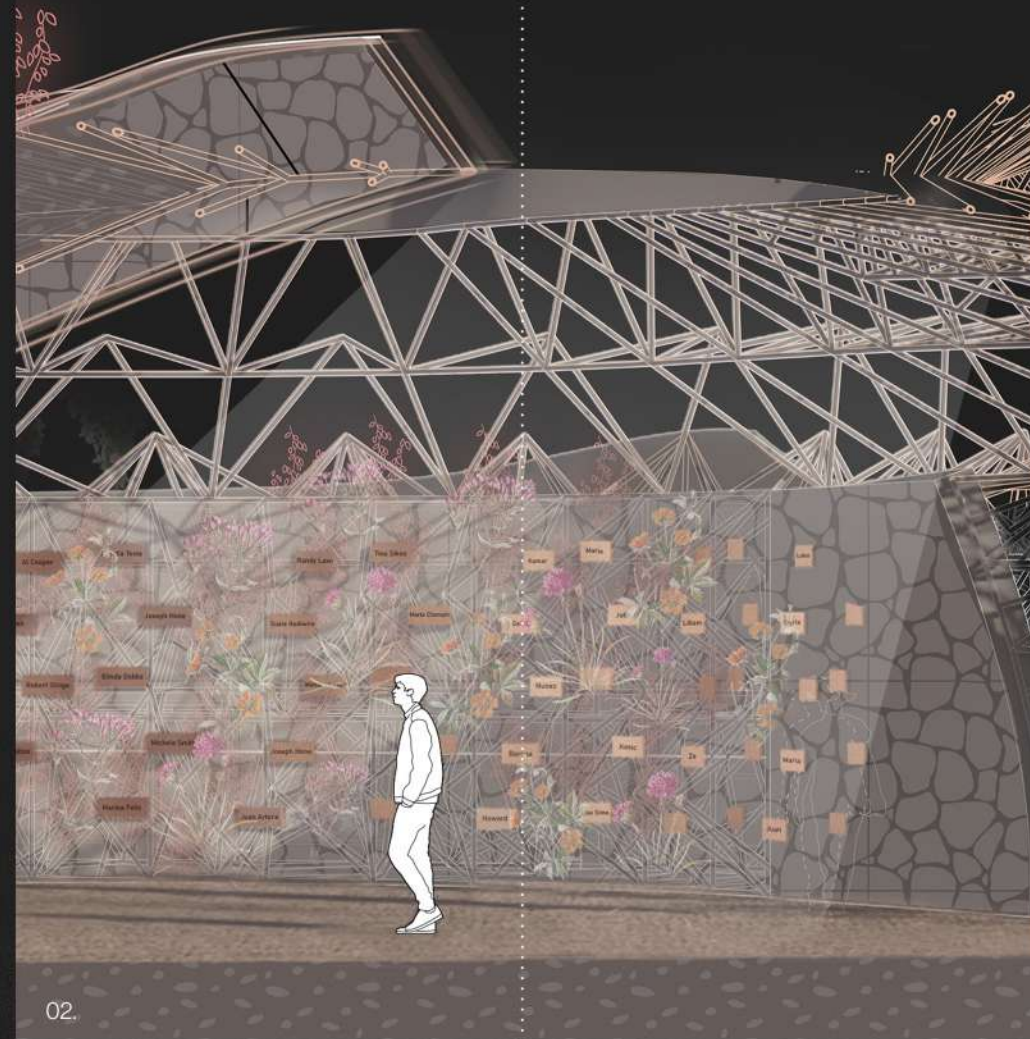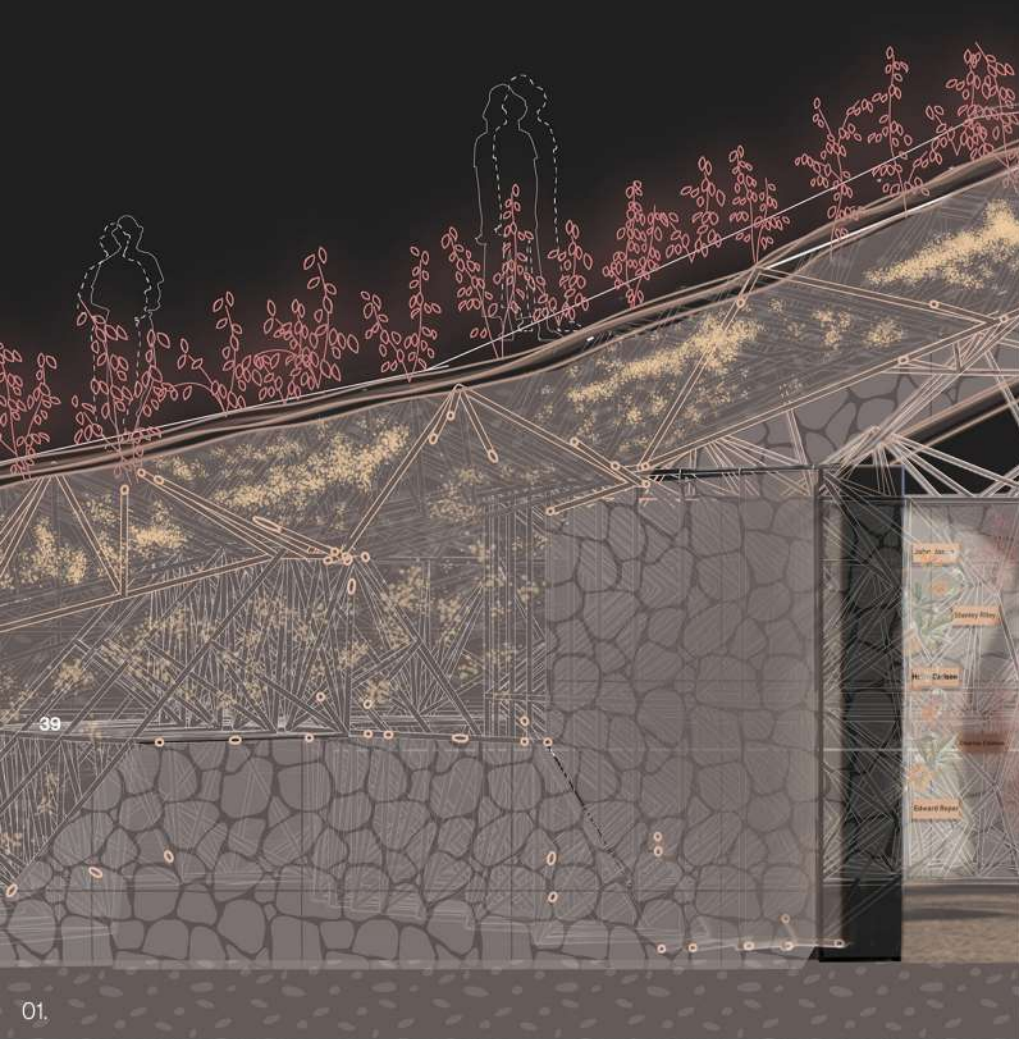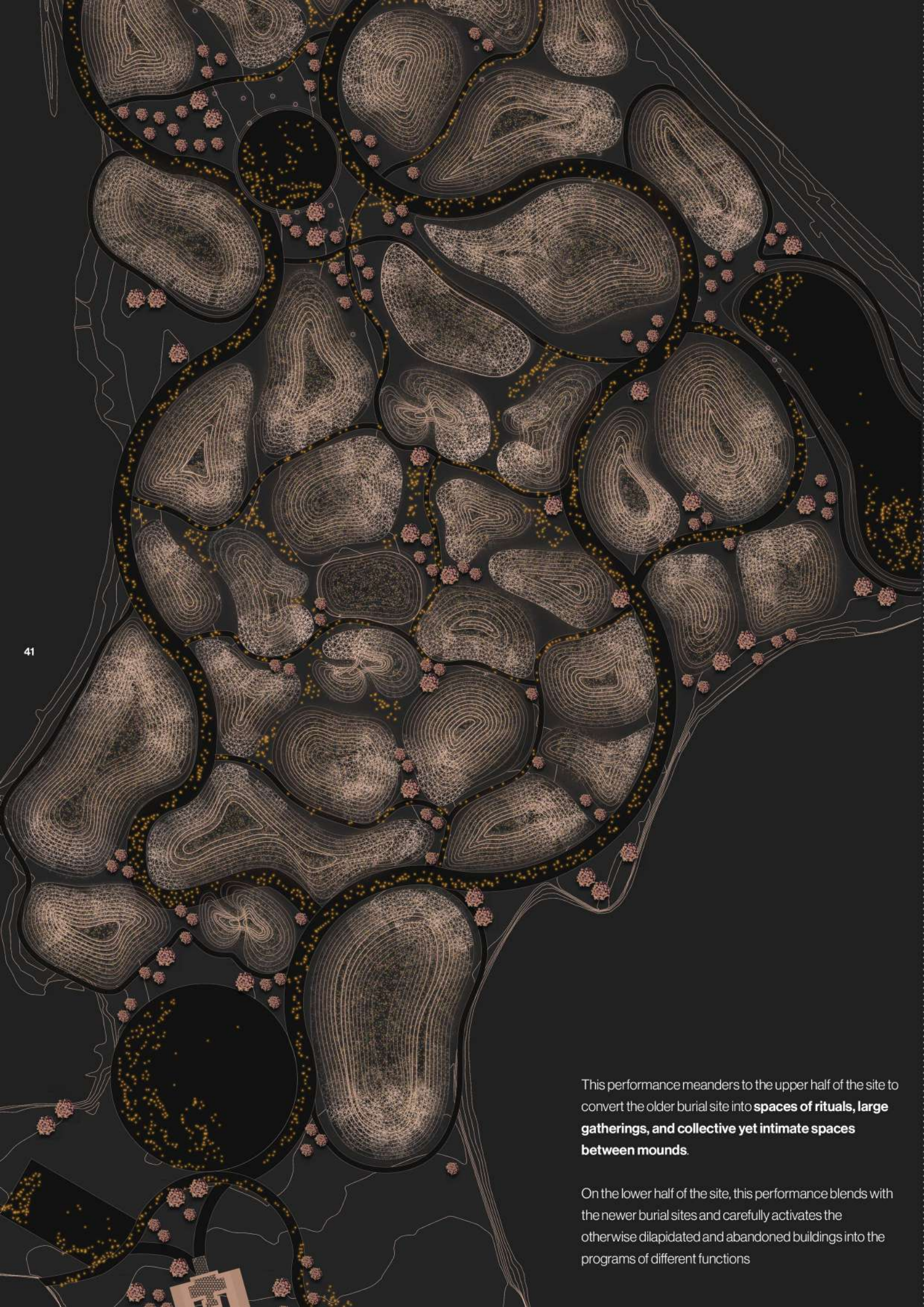
This performance meanders to the upper half of the site to convert the older burial site into **spaces of rituals, large gatherings, and collective yet intimate spaces between mounds**.

On the lower half of the site, this performance blends with the newer burial sites and carefully activates the otherwise dilapidated and abandoned buildings into the programs of different functions
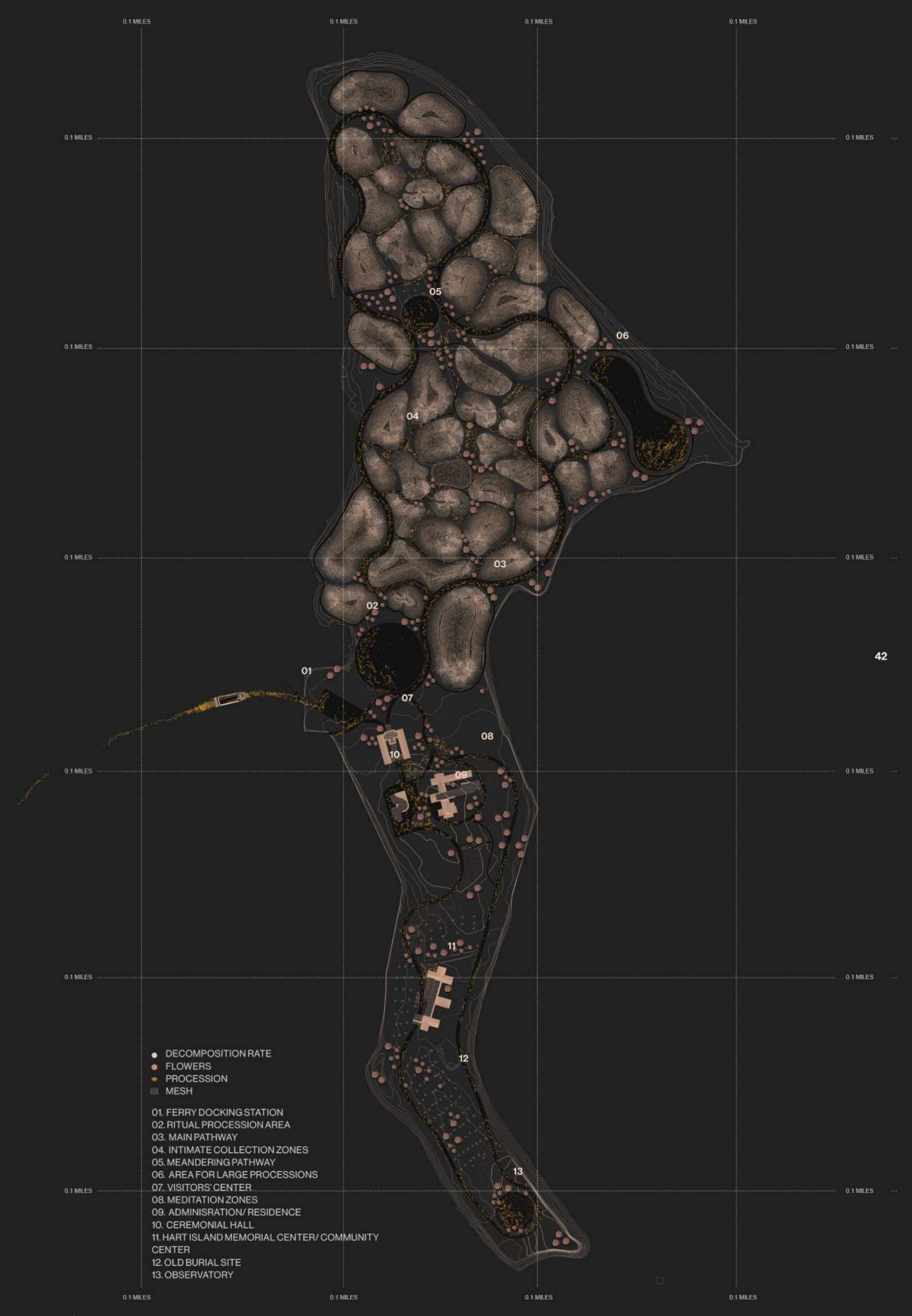
● DECOMPOSITION RATE
● FLOWERS
● PROCESSION
▨ MESH

01. FERRY DOCKING STATION
02. RITUAL PROCESSION AREA
03. MAIN PATHWAY
04. INTIMATE COLLECTION ZONES
05. MEANDERING PATHWAY
06. AREA FOR LARGE PROCESSIONS
07. VISITORS' CENTER
08. MEDITATION ZONES
09. ADMINISRATION/ RESIDENCE
10. CEREMONIAL HALL
11. HART ISLAND MEMORIAL CENTER/ COMMUNITY CENTER
12. OLD BURIAL SITE
13. OBSERVATORY

Which furthermore opens up the space for different rituals memorializing death.
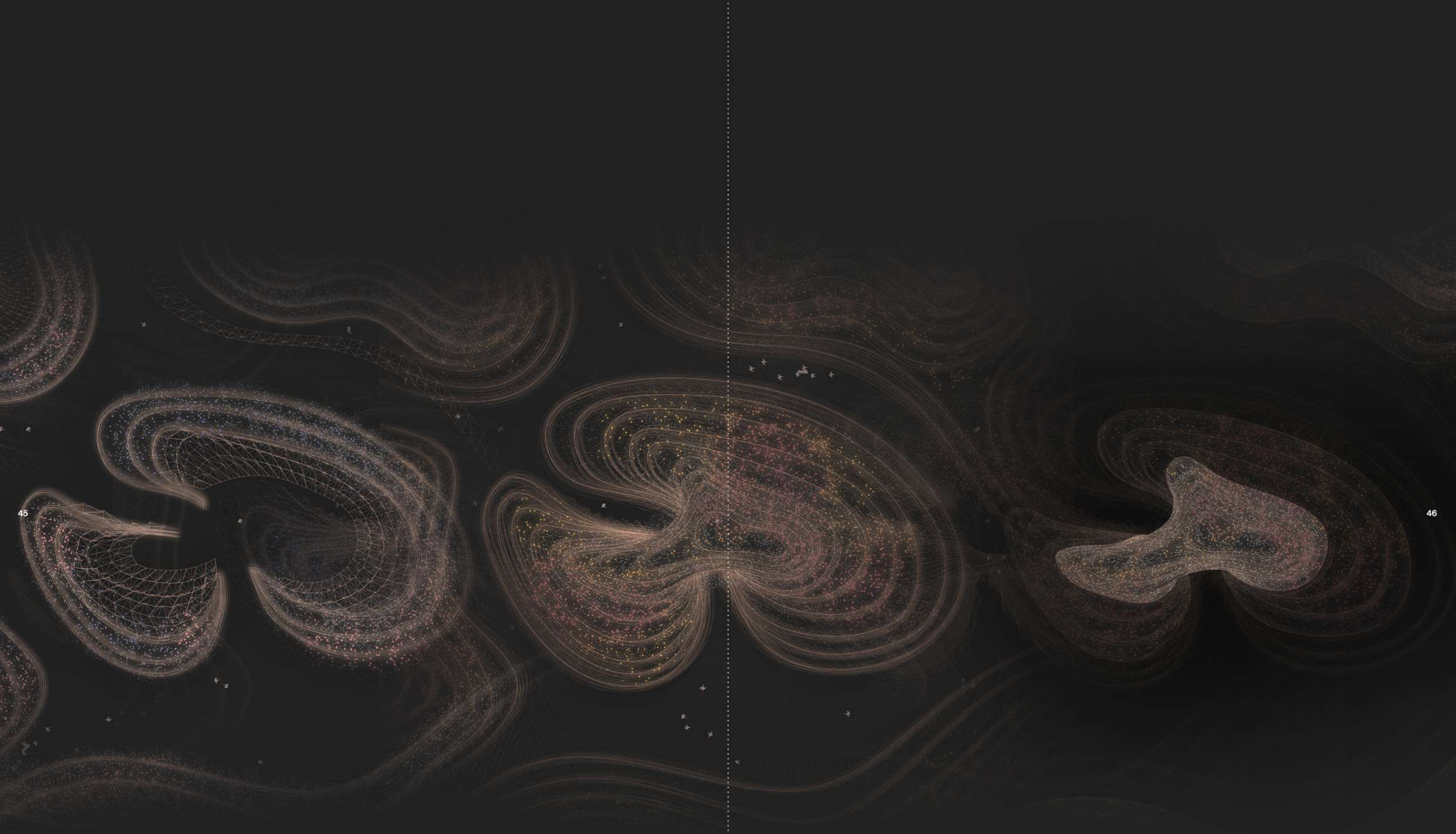
Another form of impending reconciliation derived from the project is that of the **island with water**.

The mounds will react to the increase in the timeline of the island and the **reconciling bodies submerging back in the water**.

And ultimately give itself back to the water **culminating itself within the cycle of life and death**.

This project aims to then employ experiences through time to create **a system of burial that isn't static, just like life and death**.

Synergising of what is below and above will transform the island into a safe haven, where New York City residents and visitors can experience loss, memory, and healing through spiritual and physical connections with the landscape and architecture.

SITUATING GENDER IN PUBLIC SPECTACLES OF DELHI

DEGENDERING PUBLIC SPECTACLES;
BODIES AND PUBLIC SPACE; BRYONY ROBERTS; SPRING 2023

If an alien were to walk the public parks of any metropolitan city of India, it must think that everyone in the city is a young, abled heterogeneous man.1

Public spaces are defined by the public using them. The resonance of their context and histories create affective atmospheres which relay themselves within the public space. "Affective atmospheres are shared, not solitary, and bodies are continuously busy judging their environments and responding to the atmospheres in which they find themselves."2 This idea emanates on the cultural and societal scale as well. **Public spaces enact a performance of phenomenologically-induced subjective experiences creating a cycle of building/re-building those experiences into spaces.** However, according to Sara Ahmed's Queer Phenomenology, public spaces are consistently contested on non-neutral grounds by social and hegemonic norms of how a society is supposed to work. This theory becomes even more prominent in highly colonialist and patriarchal countries like India. The specificities of intersectional narratives in India stem from the imperial, patriarchal, and heterosexual ideas which resonate within the people using public spaces. A layered cycle of hegemony, patriarchy, and imperialism charge each other to create and re-create the affective atmospheres through which these public spaces then indulge in exclusionary environments.

India Gate, a sandstone-clad war memorial, is one of the most important monuments of colonial history for the residents of Delhi. An atypical fact about India Gate is that it has always accommodated public from all social and structural hierarchies—in a city deeply rooted in the ideas of elitism and imperialism. So, this space is truly civic. A truly civic space in a great metropolis as Delhi yields a holistic understanding of how public spaces are or could be used by different bodies in India. Spatially, the site exhibits qualities similar to a lot of other public sites in India. The space surrounding this memorial comprises lush, green, manicured landscaping intently framing the monument while the corners enveloping the lawns observe a tenacious feeling of disorder and chaos—illuminating the background of how India has rendered its communal narrative.

Ice cream stalls, balloon vendors, and cars are ambiguously positioned around the monument with negligible surveillance contrasting significant police barricading. While the lawns adorn a few benches and ill-planned/ill-maintained restrooms, it reveals an insignificant extent of socio-spatial awareness. With almost no interventions, the space immerses in prejudiced pretentions juxtaposing different layers of societal issues with each other.

The socio-political affectations of the urbanism overshadowing India Gate in Delhi have been consistently vigorous—creating and recreating hegemonic awareness of masculine, heterosexual narratives. In the last decade, this civic space has witnessed multiple acts of gender-based violence, harassment, and segregation. Many reports have blamed the lack of lighting, predominant dark spots, and lack of security for these problems. While these are the results of poor spatial strategies, (which this paper will exemplify shortly,) this cycle of gender-based societal exclusion originates from a deeper context. Crisis is not exceptional to history or consciousness but a process embedded in the ordinary that unfolds in stories about navigating what's overwhelming.2 However, the unexceptional stories intuitively arise from those historical contexts consciously built into the societal structures.

" The patriarchal city is built on the assumption that certain bodies have the right to be present and move freely, while others are excluded or constrained." 4

So, how is this patriarchal city built? According to Lauren Berlant in Cruel Optimism, impression of history looks at the overwhelming ordinary disorganized by forces of authority. The forces of authority in India come from a strong lineage of hegemonic control which allowed for the cultural rendition of the country's habitation to become innately masculine. Oppressed and controlled by the British and Mughals, India's individualistic identity stemmed from its ancient scriptures of Vedas. While Vedas held a strong spiritual interpretation of Hinduism as a way of living, it entirely omitted the existence of women* from it. And, in most cases, reduced them as objects of reproductive availability and domestic capabilities. A central theme of femininity became piety, submissiveness, and domesticity; contrary to which, loose women would be categorized by their sexual availability, often reduced to embodiment of self-reliance. In such illustrations, women were entirely barred from existing in public spaces. This then pushed itself into the colonial era where an added layer of imperialism and elitism overpowered the societal scale of thinking/performing in public spectacles and also became the protagonist of the nation's social crisis.

In addition to structural obstacles, **a monochromatic understanding of private spaces and public spaces was intensely propagated for these intersectional groups**. As suggested by Ahmed, the architecture of patriarchy in India stems from the reproduction of power—either in the form of Vedas, the Mughals, or the Imperials. These authorities then create boundaries of exclusion and marginalization of certain sections of the community.

1 Navya Khanna, Prarthana Puthran, "Women in Public Spaces: When Gender Is Ignored While Shaping Cities," Feminism in India, November 2021, https://feminisminindia.com/
2 Lauren Gail Berlant, Cruel Optimism (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2012).
3 Dave McClane, "7 Day Itinerary for India's Golden Triangle: New Delhi, Agra & Jaipur," Man Vs Globe, February 27, 2023, https://www.manvsglobe.com/india-golden-triangle-itinerary-delhi-agra-jaipur/.
4 Sara Ahmed, Queer Phenomenology Orientations, Objects, Others (Durham: Duke University Press, 2006).

"If orientation is a matter of how we reside in space, then sexual orientation might also be a matter of residence, of how we inhabit spaces, and who or what we inhabit spaces with." 4

Creating orientation binaries generalizes different kinds of performances within public spaces. It reduces spatial design into hierarchal categories where prioritization is given to certain orientations which are socially and phenomenologically more active in those spaces. Berlant's idea of intuition works as a kind of archiving mechanism for the affects that are expressed in habituated and spontaneous behaviour that appears to manage the ongoing present. The intuitions displayed by performances of these binaries can suggest an understanding of the archive of hegemonic, heterosexual stories used to design public spaces.

In any given day at India Gate, women are generally found in huddled groups, comprising of at least one man. Women are found to situate themselves in spaces with the perception of corners (like trees, edge of the walls, lamp posts). Ahmed's notion of phenomenology explores how bodies are shaped by histories, which gives bodies their gestures and dispositions. The enactment of hinting towards intimate spaces by women suggest silent, soft protests of demanding safety from public spaces. A kind of safety that they essentially endeavor to find/expect in all the other realms of life. The bodily orientation of women observed in India gate urges towards the kinds of ensemble that attract the least amount of gaze. Most of the women style themselves in traditional or conservative western clothing. So, these histories of crisis become a part of their material inclinations as well. Women can be seen either standing, adopting hasted temporality in their gestures, or sitting on the grass with their families, framing an intimate use of the space. An extension of this act can be seen amongst children who gravitate towards spaces where women feel more comfortable in. So, **the execution of gender in public spaces are either transitional, or an extension of their performance in the domestic spheres.**

Spatial negotiations by men, on the other hand, emit added confidence and secure negotiations. Men can be seen resting in arbitrary spaces and unpredictable numbers thereby displaying gratuitous representation in the design of public spaces. This is in addition to the fact that a large portion of the public space of India Gate is occupied by men—which feeds into the historically engrained patriarchy that exists in the country.
India's standard spatial planning methodologies reflect a unique impression of patriarchal bias. The intuitiveness of spatial design leans towards the same patriarchal biases that were unconsciously embodied through historical and contemporary crises. The bias then becomes an inert practice in spatial design creating brittle social infrastructures. Deconstructing the layers of spatial design of India Gate expresses prejudice and lack of representation of non-male identities. And also exposes its unintentional gendered segregation.
Repetitive performances of hegemonic asymmetrical gender identities and heterosexual desires congeal over time to produce the appearance that the street is normally a heterosexual space.4 However, in India, these desires are inherently masculine. So, this forces the appearance of public spaces to engulf itself in a vicious cycle of misrepresentation and dissent.

When the lush, green, manicured landscaping omits the intentional addition of spaces of respite, it portrays unconscious, embodied ideas of exclusion which perpetuates the existing hegemonic narratives of masculinity. When the vendor stalls unanimously scatter and occupy arbitrary spots around the lawns, they reduce possible situations of socio-spatial gendered negotiation. When restrooms are not planned/surveilled, their inherent masculine dominance disrupts the soft/slow protest of expecting equal rights in spaces. When lighting is designed just for spatial aesthetics, it compromises the positive affectations of acknowledging safety felt by different bodies. Critical traditions demonstrate the contours

problem at hand is apprehending the historical present.2 **The historical present is the dissent in women's abilities hindered by the lack of equal access to and representation in public spaces.**

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Currently, India Gate is going through rehabilitation as a result of the "decolonizing" initiatives taken by the current ruling party. This redevelopment project is the government's attempt to redeem the existing footing of Indian national politics from the control of imperial aesthetics. While the project remains to be heavily criticized by the opposing bodies, it holds/or rather, held, a nascent potential to look back at public spaces from the first principles of the existence of all bodies. However, a majority of the project's intent shoots from iconoclastic tendencies to redefine the structures of power and authority. And hence, the design of the spaces is navigated towards creating monuments of re-shifted power. Power of authority, not the power of the erotic. As said by Audre Lorde, the principal horror of any system which defines the good in terms of profit rather than in terms of human need, or which defines the human need to the exclusion of the psychic and emotional components of that need - the principal horror of such a system is that it robs our work of its erotic value, its erotic power and life appeal and fulfillment. 7

Creating a space truly de-gendered in the Indian context requires the distillation of layers that go much deeper than colonial effects. The ideals instilled during women's socialization in the world emphasize and thus, manifest, a reality wherein the public space, and by extension, the ability to dissent in these spaces is a privilege for non-cishet male identities, rather than a right.8 **And most of these ideals stem unconsciously from home, from childhood, cyclic affectation of gendered performances, and most importantly, the embodied spaces.** A big part of creating a change in the social structure can energize from/with the spatial structure which acknowledges the capitalistic and authoritarian understanding of society, yet alone enacts on it.

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7 Audre Lorde, Uses of the Erotic: The Erotic as Power (Tucson, AZ: Kore Press, 2000).
8 Priyanka Joshi, "How Women's Dissent Is Impeded by Lack of Access to Public Spaces," Smashboard (Smashboard, August 22, 2022),
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ARCHIVAL OF HARLEM RENAISSANCE

MODELING PUBLIC SPECTACLES OF HARLEM; w/CHRISTOPHER WIERER
POWER TOOLS; JELISA BLUMBERG; SPRING 2023

The project considers a contemporary cultural renaissance by researching aesthetic culture and visualizing spatial practice.

Focusing on the neighborhoods of Harlem as a crucial site of cultural renaissance in the early 20th Century. Much of the studies in architecture and the built environment rely on tools offered by European and American modernism. By innovating the tools of archival using the Harlem Rennaissance, **the idea of this seminar pushes itself to archive the experiental using the physical**. The Harlem Rennaissance, also known by other names, was a product of the Great Migration from the south as well as from the Carribbean and West Indies to New York City.

Literature, performance, art, music and style emerged from the cross-disciplinary and multicultural collisions in this area. From this exploded new methodologies that still resonate today. During this semester, we will be considering topics of investigation through a contemporary lens to make sense of how this informs the future.

to employ domestic help. Or as Escodebo says, it leads to socio spatial invisibilization. However, the historical, and socio-economic conditions of India have layers of complexity that make this invisibilization seem ordinary—to the elite and the excluded. Hence, this paper will aim to deconstruct the layers of societal disposition on classism that goes beyond the scope of spatial planning in India.

Scaling back into history, Ancient India constructed its caste systems where manual labour became the point of the divide. Upper caste systems (Brahmins)4 received pedagogy-related jobs and occupied big airy homes close to temples. The lower castes, on the other hand, were ordained into labour-intensive field jobs with oppressive conditions to live in. A certain section of the lower caste was also deemed to be "untouchables". This mental subjugation persuading a sense of hegemonic perspectives and inferiority was aggravated further by colonialism in India. Post-colonialism, the remnants of classism are still evident in the manner in which different socio economic classes function. More western sections of society have access to a better standard of life than the ones which are not. Furthermore, such classist societal segregation even reveals itself in generalised gender configurations. Many feminist pieces of literature argue that society often contributes to patriarchal constructions of women's subordinate positions by providing political space for women's incorporation into civil society not as individuals and citizens but as members of a family belonging to the private sphere.5 Most of the domestic workers in India are employed keeping this in mind. According to that, the biologically aligned, inherent job for a woman is to work in a house—for a family.

One of the New Indian Cinema masterpieces, **Ankur, a movie by Shyam Benegal** portrays this feminist posthuman discourse of division and makes the voices of the marginalised community audible to the highly imperialised elite segments of the society. The film acknowledges the stark contrast between the life of a patrilineal landlord and a house-help. While the landlord has a bungalow in the field with an open porch and airy rooms, the house help is subjected to live in a dilapidated house on the other side of the field. An extramarital affair ending with a pregnancy shows the extent to which she is dehumanised and oppressed by the landlord without any apparent consequences to be subjected on him. Such cinematic perspectives played a huge role in acknowledging the exclusion and invisibility of labour represented through the use of spaces. Nevertheless, the critics deemed the film despicable and flagrant.

Since the precedence of elitism and exclusion dates back centuries, the idea of superiority and inferiority is profoundly embedded in different sections of the Indian community. Consequently, segregation has unconsciously become a naturalised order of social functioning in India. While architecture has a role to play in invisibilizing spaces of labour, the transcalarity of architectural elements that require an intrinsic level of change is monumental. And mostly generational. In addition to changing the spaces themselves, a shift in socio-eco political elements of society becomes vitally important to bring about a change to domestic configurations of labour.

Generally, built architecture will always the potential to introduce a certain extent of inclusivity of the marginalised and disfranchised community into society. However, the architecture of inclusivity on the societal scale will continue to have deeper roots to cut.

THE ARCHITECTURE OF ELITISM AND EXCLUSION IN INDIA

INTERSECTIONAL IDEAS OF ELITISM IN INDIA;
ARGUMENTS; ASHRAF ABDALLA; SUMMER 2022

Every morning, I used to wake up in my bedroom in India with one of our house-help (Sunita) switching the fan off to sweep the dust from the room. It used to take her fifteen minutes to sweep, and then wipe the floor with a wet cloth. Sunita didi would then proceed to clean six more rooms and two more bathrooms. She took four hours to clean the entire house—every day. The compensation she got for this job was Rs. 3500/- ($40) every month. After a cup of tea and a meal composed of leftovers, she would then proceed to work for the next house.

During a typical day at her job, I never physically saw her use a washroom or take a break.

Frida Escodebo focuses on this invisibility of labour through Domestic Orbits. Domestic Orbits highlights how architecture's selective concealment of domestic space makes it complicit with social inequities associated with gender, class, and race in Mexico.2 Her paper explores the question of exclusion induced cartographically in spaces. These exclusions bleed into social configurations of class, gender, and race. Conclusively, Escobedo poses the question of how architecture can intervene to help recognise, reduce, and redistribute the problems faced by domestic workers. But the argument preceding this study remains open. CAN architecture help recognise, reduce, and redistribute the problems faced by domestic workers? The current state of socio-economic fragmentations that exist in Mexico creates a strong parallel with the elitism and exclusion existing in India. Indian society is characterised by a significant horizontal (religious, regional, Linguistic) and vertical (income, occupation, caste)

1 Didi is a Hindi word meaning sister. It is used as a word of respect to address older women.

2 Alex, Anderson, "Domestic Orbits: Frida Escobedo on Architecture's Tendency to Conceal Spaces of Domestic Labor." Harvard Graduate School of Design, November 20, 2019, https://www.gsd.harvard.edu

3 Abdul, S, and Zinat, A, "Socio-spatial Segregation and Exclusion in Mumbai", The Urban Book Series, March 30, 2021

4 Brahmins are designated as the priestly class as they serve as priests and religious teachers

5 B.S.Yeoh; and Huang,S, "Spaces at the Margins: Migrant Domestic Workers and the Development of Civil Society in Singapore" Environment and Planning A: Economy and Space 31, no. 7 (1999): 1149–67, https://doi.org/10.1068/a311149 V

TRACING THE FLOODS

REVISITING HEGEMONIC TOOLS OF ECO-MEASURING; w/RIDHI CHOPRA
PROXY LANDSCAPES; ELISE HUNCHUK AND MARCO FERRARI; SUMMER 2022

As coastal shores grow in population, more people expose themselves to the risks of potential sea-level rise and flooding. These threats are aggravated by the climate crisis which contributes to erratic storms, storm surges, and shoreline erosion.

Through this research and intervention we want to **revisit the tools used to examine the dramatic change in flooding conditions of Staten Island and use it as a proxy to understand the potency of reclaiming wetlands in other endangered sites across the world**.

Staten Island is located in the southernmost part of New York and is called as the lesser-known borough. It has a population of less than 500,000, making it the least populous borough of New york state. Staten Island saw an influx of tourists and urbanisation during the early 90's when the connectivity of the island improved. In the following years, Due to this rapid development, the island started facing the repercussions of these developments like flooding. To control those, the various departments of NYC have actively taken initiatives to amend these issues.
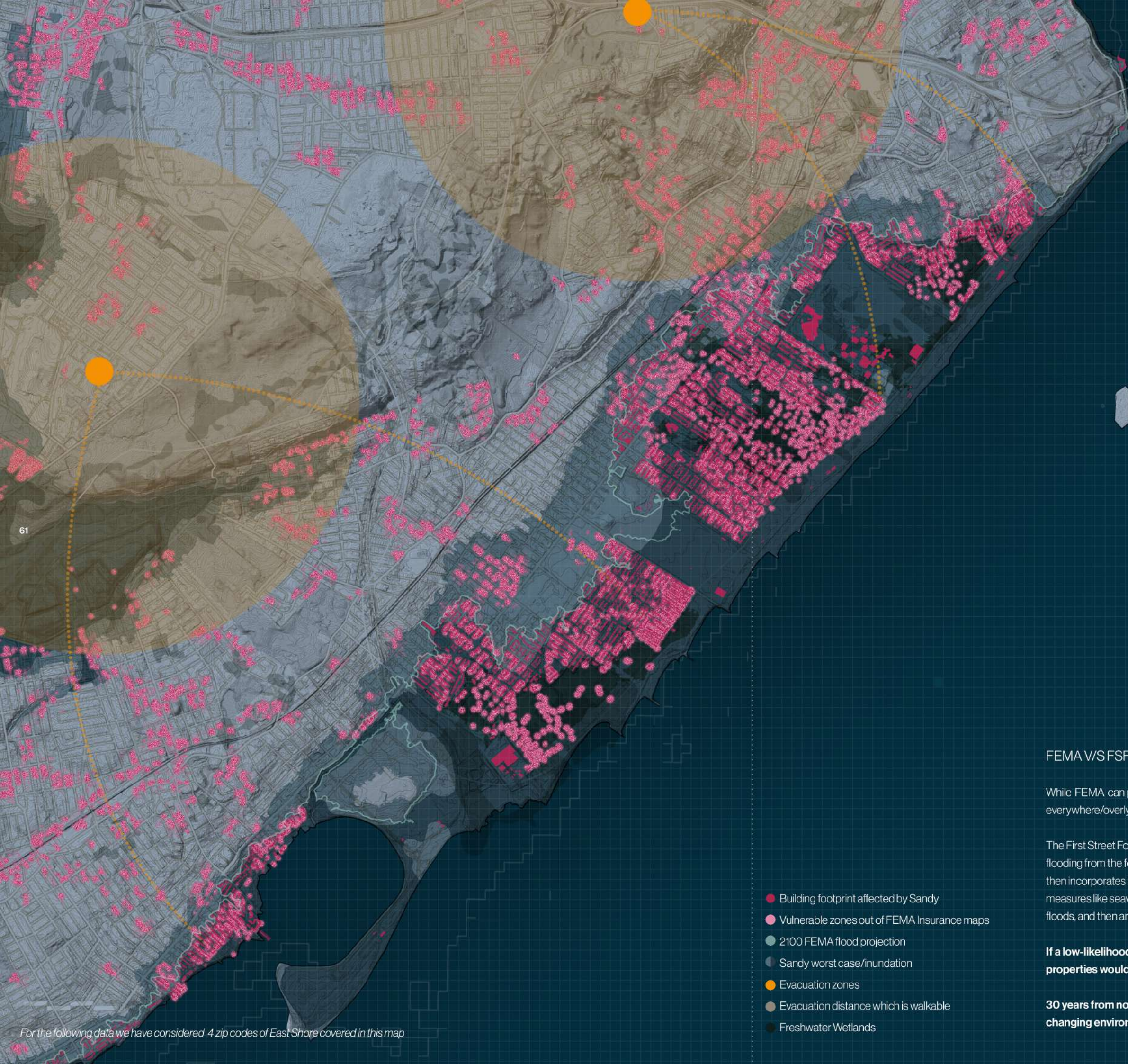
In the 1960s, Ian McHarg, examined land-use suitability for Staten Island with attention to ecological planning by analysing physical and cultural characteristics of land features and biophysical vulnerabilities such as tidal inundation and coastal flooding. He analysed the map to spot the areas in Staten Island that are least suitable for urbanisation in the city. **The current building footprint of Staten Island when overlaid, coincides in some areas with the unsuitable urbanisation zoning suggested by McHarg** which consists of 16.5% of the total population and was also one of the worst affected areas during Hurricane Sandy.

The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) is the agency responsible for leading the Nation's efforts to prepare for, protect and mitigate against, respond to, and recover from the impacts of natural disasters and man-made incidents. FEMA provides the flood hazard data to support the National Flood Insurance Program.

The Flood Maps are developed using the sound science generated by engineering experts, and FEMA always accepts additional, validated flood hazard information from property owners and communities. Through this collaborative process, a community can review, appeal, and contribute to the development of a Flood Map before it is adopted by the community.

Building footprint affected by Sandy
Unsuitable zones predecited by Ian McHarg
Wetlands
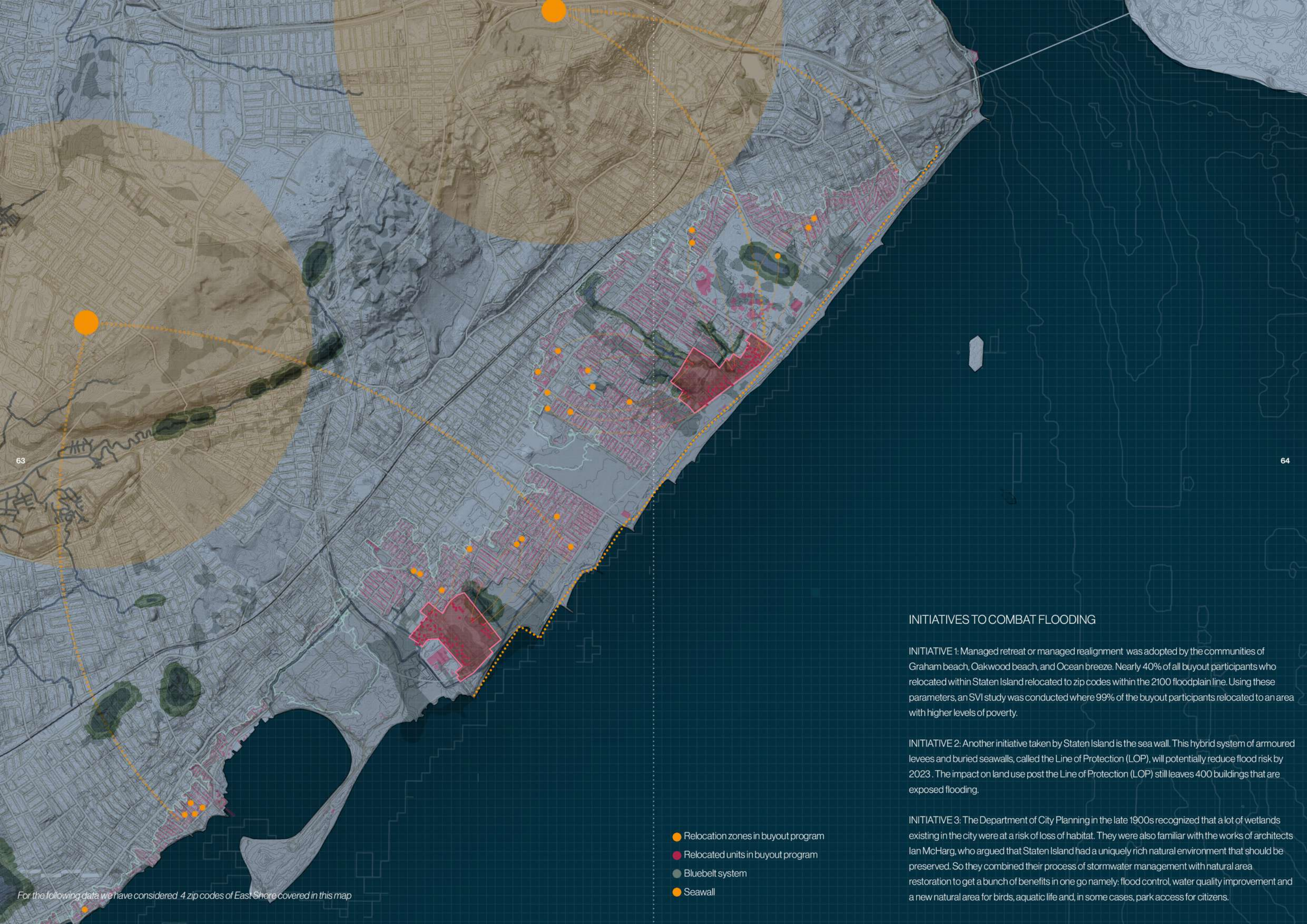Watersheds
Flood prediction for 2021 by FEMA

FEMA V/S FSFFM V/S CRITICAL RISK FACTOR MAPS

While FEMA can provide valuable information on flood risk, they are not available everywhere/overly accurate.

The First Street Foundation Flood Model, a non profit initiative calculates any home's probability of flooding from the four major flood types: pluvial (rain), fluvial (rivers), tidal events, and storm surge, then incorporates high-precision elevation and building footprint data along with local adaptation measures like seawalls and levees into its flood projections, validates against modeled historic floods, and then analyzes and maps the flood risk.

If a low-likelihood storm resulting in severe flooding was to occur today, around 8161 properties would be affected. A lot of which are not covered by FEMA.

30 years from now, an event of this same likelihood would affect 9162 properties due to a changing environment.

● Building footprint affected by Sandy

● Vulnerable zones out of FEMA Insurance maps

● 2100 FEMA flood projection

◗ Sandy worst case/inundation

● Evacuation zones

● Evacuation distance which is walkable

● Freshwater Wetlands

For the following data we have considered 4 zip codes of East Shore covered in this map

INITIATIVES TO COMBAT FLOODING

INITIATIVE 1: Managed retreat or managed realignment was adopted by the communities of Graham beach, Oakwood beach, and Ocean breeze. Nearly 40% of all buyout participants who relocated within Staten Island relocated to zip codes within the 2100 floodplain line. Using these parameters, an SVI study was conducted where 99% of the buyout participants relocated to an area with higher levels of poverty.

INITIATIVE 2: Another initiative taken by Staten Island is the sea wall. This hybrid system of armoured levees and buried seawalls, called the Line of Protection (LOP), will potentially reduce flood risk by 2023 . The impact on land use post the Line of Protection (LOP) still leaves 400 buildings that are exposed flooding.

INITIATIVE 3: The Department of City Planning in the late 1900s recognized that a lot of wetlands existing in the city were at a risk of loss of habitat. They were also familiar with the works of architects Ian McHarg, who argued that Staten Island had a uniquely rich natural environment that should be preserved. So they combined their process of stormwater management with natural area restoration to get a bunch of benefits in one go namely: flood control, water quality improvement and a new natural area for birds, aquatic life and, in some cases, park access for citizens.

- ● Relocation zones in buyout program
- ● Relocated units in buyout program
- ● Bluebelt system
- ● Seawall

For the following data we have considered 4 zip codes of East Shore covered in this map

VERTICAL TRACE

The current tools of tracing/eco-measurement do not account for wetlands and the potential of naturally induced storm water management. **This design provides a physical tool of eco measuring vertical inundations, which are constantly evolving.**

Bluebelts have consistently proven to improve flood-prone sites by controlling the run-off which would otherwise inundate the chosen site by ten feet. The site also consists on shallow emergent marshland, and swamps- thereby making the outermost layer the most adaptive to an intervention.

Some species of native plants are planted around the catchment basins because their roots are home to beneficial bacteria that help clean the water. This particular bluebelt as you can see also comes within the future flood zone which is a part of the project motivation. The DEP also utilises the NYC parks as a part of their bluebelt systems and enhances their usage.
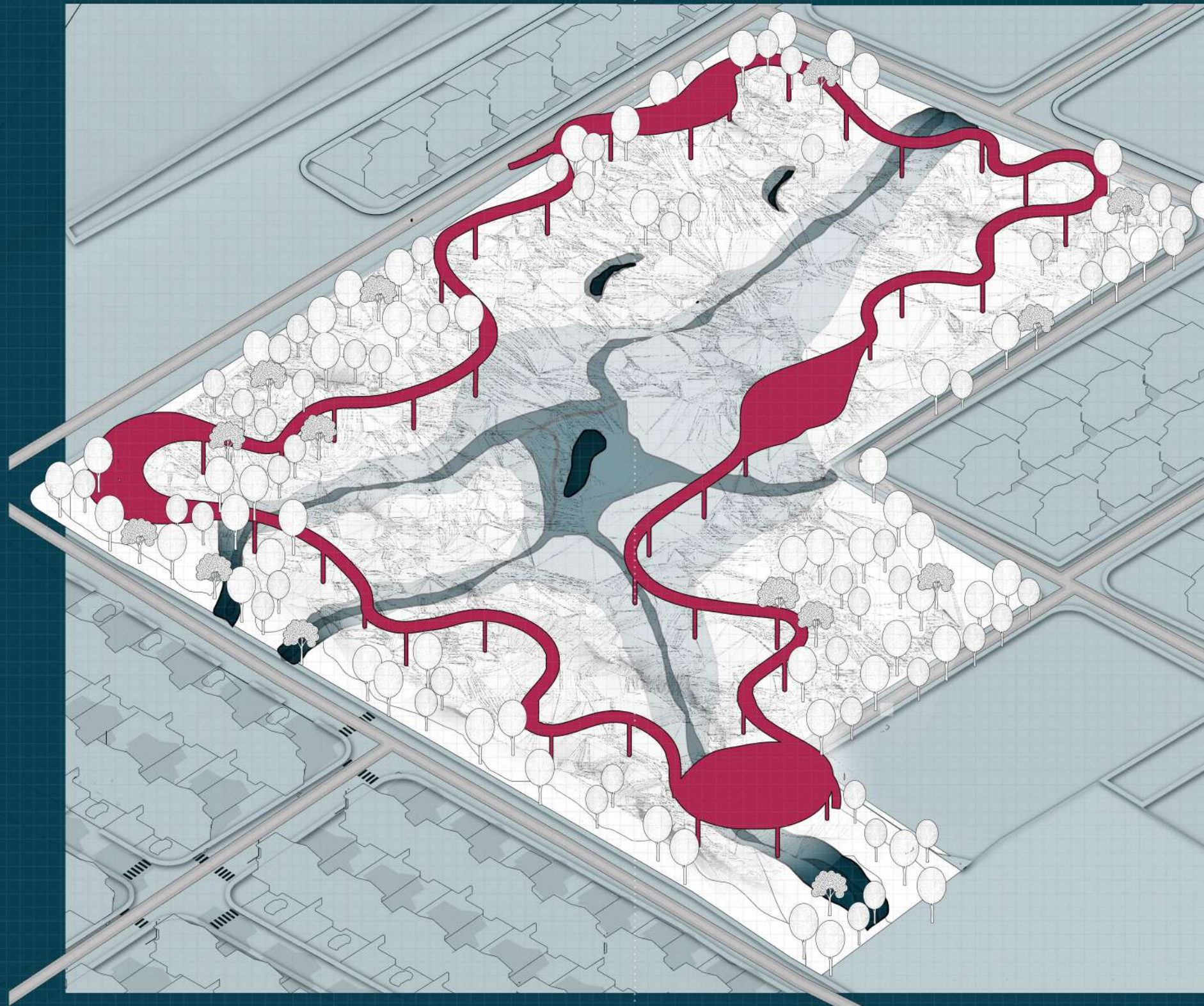
As per the study done by FEMA, the chosen site (NC-11) inundates with a base flood elevation of 10 feet. This is the existing flooding condition with blubelts intervening in the site. This 10-feet inundation follows the flow of contours to give varied slope of water.

A trail meandering through the site traces this inundation using its shape from below and acts as a walking/evacuation path from above. **The silhouette of this trail is decided on the basis of the ground it sits on and the trees it passes through.** The trail is designed inorder to be as minimally invasive to the Bluebelt as possible. Acknowledging the inevitability of climate

vasive to the Bluebelt as possible. Acknowledging the inevitability of climate crisis, the trail also performs the **role of evacuation zones.** As most of the East shore has evacuation zones as far as 3 miles, the width of this trail widens in some areas to perform as evacuation zones.
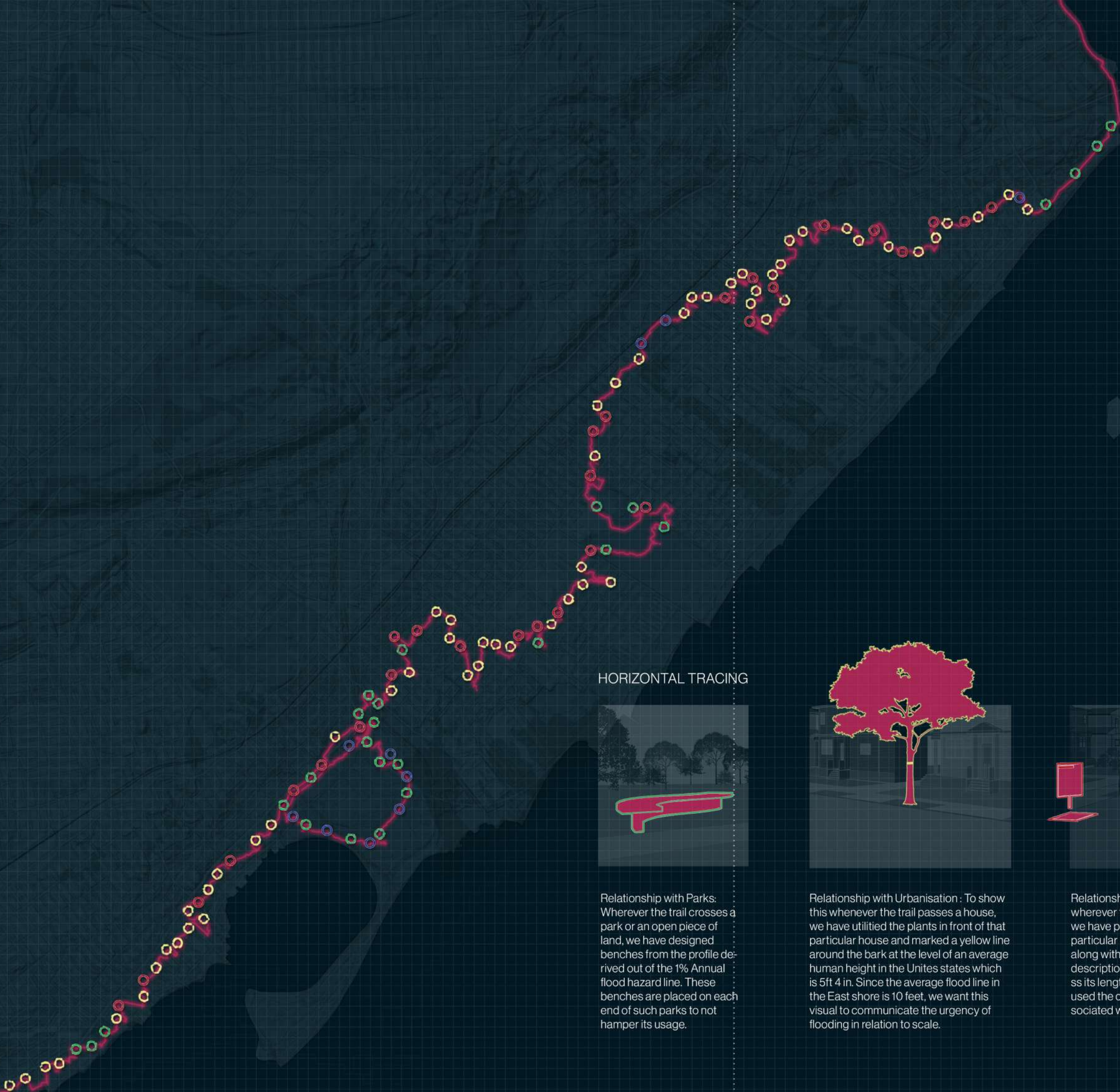
HORIZONTAL TRACING
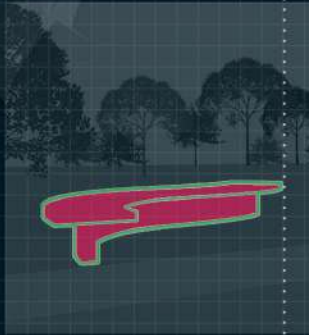
Relationship with Parks: Wherever the trail crosses a park or an open piece of land, we have designed benches from the profile derived out of the 1% Annual flood hazard line. These benches are placed on each end of such parks to not hamper its usage.

Relationship with Urbanisation : To show this whenever the trail passes a house, we have utilitied the plants in front of that particular house and marked a yellow line around the bark at the level of an average human height in the Unites states which is 5ft 4 in. Since the average flood line in the East shore is 10 feet, we want this visual to communicate the urgency of flooding in relation to scale.
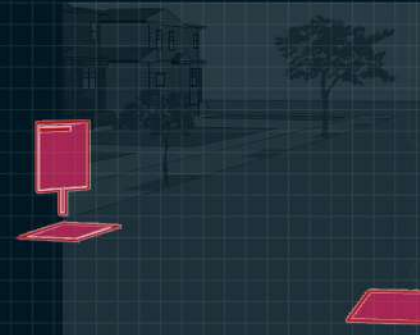
Relationship with Roads: For this, wherever the trail crosses a road, we have placed a square in those particular nodes to form a path along with signage boards giving description of the trail across its length. For this insert we have used the color red which is also associated with danger and impact.
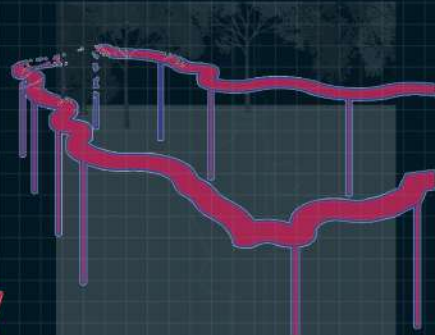
Relationship with Bluebelts : A trail meandering through the site traces this inundation using its shape from below and acts as a walking/ evacuation path from above. The silhouette of this trail is decided on the basis of the ground it sits on and the trees it passes through.